

Children's Art Showcased in Visitacion Valley

by Crezia Tano

Despite pouring rain and cold wind, the Boys and Girls Club hosted their annual Greater Visitacion Valley Boys and Girls Club Art Show on Dec. 17.

Art Director Sarah Schumm had a difficult time selecting pieces that could be entered into the show. But in the end, 25 pieces were chosen.

Art pieces fell into one of five categories: Multicolor, Monochromatic, Mixed Media, Watercolor, and Acrylic.

The ages of the children varied as well. The youngest artist was 6 years old and the oldest was 12.

People who stopped by to view the work were impressed with all the impressive works, but many were taken back by the art from the youngest artists.

They were amazed that children so young could produce such beautifully detailed work.

Debra Munk and Dean Move from the Resident Artist Program, and two local residents, Felix Wong and Bob Lehman, volunteered to be judges for this year's event. They had a trying time selecting from the many wonderful pieces on display but eventually came to a decision about which artwork would go on to a regional show in the spring.

Winners of this year's Greater Visitacion Valley Boys and Girls Club Art Show included:

(Ages 6-9) Acrylic: William Shear; Multicolor: Eliud Aruela; Water-



A local resident stopped by to admire artwork by Visitacion Valley youth.

color: Titus Huang.

(Ages 10-12) Acrylic: Nikki Carroll; Monochromatic: Janet Wu; Mixed Media: Tracy Guan; Water Color: Tracy Guan.

Thanks are extended to: Michael Quinlan and Con Lyons for

donating space for the event at 199 Rutland St.; volunteers: Molly Hassler, Chaster Chan and Sara Chan; Joe Leland for donating coffee; and to all the judges. This event was sponsored by the Boys and Girls Club and VVBOOM.

Brisk Neighborhood Sales for New Visitacion Valley Book

After months of anticipation, San Francisco's Visitacion Valley finally went on sale along Leland Avenue on Dec. 13 and has already been given ecstatic approval by a few of the neighborhood's harshest critics.

"A rare piece of San Francisco history" described one satisfied reader of the Arcadia Press book which took the Visitacion Valley History Project, a group of five dedicated local historians a little more than a year to compile.

Their extensive research re-

sulted in so many interesting historical photographs that there could easily have been enough material for a second book. But in making final selections, they agreed to select photos which could tell more than one story to remain in the 128-page framework of Arcadia's Images of America series.

Most of the images eventually selected for San Francisco's Visitacion Valley have never been seen before by the general public. Captions for pictures include the

personal memories of many longtime Valley residents who both grew up and worked in the neighborhood.

According to the authors, the book is essentially designed to be a historical tour around the Valley. Its pages include chapters of: Discovery and Settlement; Commerce and Transportation; Community Life; The Valley at Play; and Homes and Buildings.

An instructor at Visitacion Valley Middle School has already expressed interest in acquiring multiple copies of the book to use in his regional history class.

Of the book five authors, Edie Epps and Betty Parshall are longtime residents of Visitacion Valley.

Epps, whose family has been a part of the neighborhood since the late 1920s, is a longtime insurance broker also active in local history organizations.

Parshall is a retired U.S. Court of Appeals deputy clerk and records supervisor who has long been involved with several neighborhood organizations.

Cynthia Cox, who works for Jewish Family and Children's Services, is well known for her historical City Guides walking tours through the Visitacion Valley.

Now retired, Jackie Fishstrom, a past president of a national credit managers' association, currently lives in a neighborhood home her built by her grandfather.

Russel Morine is Joe Leland, both Grapevine columnist and purveyor of beverages at his shop at 28 Leland Ave. He's currently working toward a Master's in city regional planning at UC Berkeley.

A majority of the proceeds from the book are being earmarked for the permanent preservation of Visitacion Valley's history, accessible to the community.

Started in 1993 on the East Coast, Arcadia Press now has more than 30 titles currently available on San Francisco neighborhood history.

Agreement Reached with Contractor For Proposed Coffman Pool Renovation

San Francisco Recreation & Park Department recently reached an agreement with contractor Angotti & Reilly within the current budget for the proposed renovation of Coffman Pool.

The contract will not be a binding unless passed at a Rec & Park commission meeting on Jan. 19.

With the prospective agreement in place, Rec & Park has now issued a tentative timeline

for project execution:

*Jan. 5, 2006: Contract brought before Rec & Park commission capital committee.

*Jan. 19: Contract brought to full commission.

*Jan. 19 to Feb. 10: Contractor to finalize city required documents.

*Feb. 13: Coffman Pool closed for renovation.

*Mar. 1 to Aug. 1, 2007: Construction for 18 months.

*Sept. 1, 2007, Coffman Pool reopens.

More City Housing for the Homeless

Standing before a packed house of policy makers, service providers and formerly homeless clients, Mayor Newsom on Dec. 20 delivered his second annual State of Homelessness address.

The speech, the first of its sort ever delivered by a Mayor of San Francisco, offered a progress report on the City's efforts to end chronic homelessness and identified a clear path forward as the Mayor moves into the second half of this administration.

Marking a major milestone in his effort to overhaul the City's homeless service system, the Mayor announced that in just five months time Care Not Cash, now formally the City's Housing First policy, will be fully implemented.

To date 1,101 chronically homeless have been housed via Housing First, an average of 57 clients housed every month.

In the coming months, the City

will open five new supportive housing sites, increasing the total permanent supportive units to 1,855 since Mayor Newsom took Office.

And as Newsom noted, not only are people getting housing, "they are staying housed. Retention in Housing First is better than 95 percent. It is clear that we are making real, measurable progress."

Other announcements included the City's receipt of \$17.3 million in Federal Homeless Assistance funding as part of the HUD McKinney-Vento Grant, and the opening of the 106-bed Plaza Hotel for disabled homeless.

The Mayor also announced the 2006 opening of a new 75-100 bed Medical Respite Center that will provide a safe place for homeless people struggling with medical, mental health, or substance abuse issues to recuperate, recover and move on to an appropriate longer-term setting.

Jury Duty Scam Leads to Identity Theft

Scammers have been using a different method to commit identity theft, according to a recent report from ScamBusters.org. It's called the jury duty scam.

A scammer calls a prospective victim claiming to work for the local court, claiming the person has failed to report for jury duty. The person is also told that an arrest warrant has also been issued.

As expected, the victim will often rightly claim never having received the jury duty notification. To supposedly double-check incorrect information, the scammer will then ask the victim for confidential information for "verification" purposes.

Specifically, the scammer asks for the victim's Social Security number, birth date, and sometimes even for credit card numbers and other private information.

Frequently caught off guard and upset at the prospect of an arrest warrant being issued, victims are much less likely to be vigilant about protecting their confidential information.

So far, this jury duty scam has been reported in Michigan, Ohio, Texas, Arizona, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Oregon and Washington state.

In reality, court workers will never call to ask for social security numbers and other private information. Most courts systems follow-up via mail and rarely, if ever, call prospective jurors.

For protection, the public is advised to never provide Social Security numbers, credit card numbers or other personal confidential information when receiving a telephone call.

A Year of Progress in Visitacion Valley

As the year draws to a close, the neighborhood looks back at a number of significant events which helped shape the future of Visitacion Valley:

*Hearing Request for Visitacion Valley Plan Area: Early in the year, Supervisor Sophie Maxwell of District 10 made a hearing request before the Land Use Committee on the potential adoption of a Redevelopment Agency Survey Area for the Visitacion Valley Plan Area. After years of work with the neighborhood, the Planning Department released a community plan for the area of Visitacion Valley at Schlage Lock, Leland Avenue, and parts of Bayshore.

*Former Valley Motel Site Draws Interest for New City Housing: City Planning expressed interest in acquiring the closed Travelodge site on Bayshore Boulevard near US101

for new housing. With demolition now continuing at the site, plans currently include construction of 32 townhouses and a building to house 56 units.

*Band's Donation to Rebuild Sunnydale Playground: Mayor Gavin Newsom was in Visitacion Valley on Feb. 1 to announce that the Dave Matthews Band had donated \$250,000 to rebuild a playground in the Sunnydale housing complex. Money was raised by the band at a charity concert in Golden Gate Park.

*Burton High School Gets New Sports Field: Burton High School installed a synthetic sports playing surface thanks to a \$200,000 grant from the National Football League (NFL) Grassroots Program, a partnership between the NFL, Youth Football fund and the bay Area Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). See Page 6

Residents Meet New Bayview Captain



Captain Albert Pardini is the new commander of the Bayview Police Station.

by Bob Lehman

During a ROSES meeting in the Bayview District on Dec. 1, residents of San Francisco's southeast sector had an opportunity to meet Captain Albert Pardini, the new commander of the Bayview Police Station.

Captain Pardini updated the group on several items currently underway at Bayview Station, including:

*The use of officers from other districts (four on the day shift and four on the night shift) to supplement his staff. He plans to offer Bayview officers this extra duty in the near

future.

*Establishing a beat in high drug usage areas.

*Assigning plain-clothes officers at different areas on an intermittent basis and later changing their assignment by putting them in uniform. This allows officers to work traffic and use their knowledge gained from plain-clothes work to make further arrests.

Pardini also reviewed some of the recent homicides which occurred in the Bayview and noted that more than half were not Bayview residents. He also related his frustration with the lack of crime witnesses.

Final Workshop for Leland Avenue Design

Visitacion Valley residents are invited to attend the third of three hands-on design workshops for the Leland Avenue Street Design Project on Saturday, Jan. 28 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Visitacion Valley Elementary School auditorium, 55 Scherwin St.

This third workshop will further explore suggested options in the Leland Avenue design process.

Participants at the second workshop on Dec. 10 identified preferred design approaches to Leland Avenue and to formulated individual streetscape elements combined to create a complete design.

On Oct. 22, community members first met to develop ideas for a new street design on Leland Avenue. A summary of their ideas is on Page 6.

Grapevine Mailbox

A Very Smart Survivor

About a month ago there was a woman standing by the mall entrance passing out flyers to all the women going in. The woman had written the flyer herself to tell about an experience she had, so that she might warn other women.

The previous day, this woman had finished shopping, went out to her car and discovered that she had a flat.

She got the jack out of the trunk and began to change the flat. A nice man dressed in business suit and carrying a briefcase walked up to her and said, "I noticed you're changing a flat tire. Would you like me to take care of it for you?"

The woman was grateful for his offer and accepted his help. They chatted amiably while the man changed the flat, and then put the flat tire and the jack in the trunk, shut it and dusted his hands off.

The woman thanked him profusely, and as she was about to get in her car, the man told her that he left his car around on the other side of the mall, and asked if she would mind giving him a lift to his car.

She was a little surprised and she asked him why his car was on the other side. He explained that he had seen an old friend in the mall that he hadn't seen for some time and they had a bite to eat and visited for a while he got turned around in the mall and left through the wrong exit, and now he was running late and his car was clear around on the other side of the mall.

The woman hated to tell him "no" because he had just rescued her from having to change her flat tire all by herself, but she felt uneasy. Then she remembered seeing the man put his briefcase in her trunk before shutting it and before he asked her for a ride to his car. She told him that she'd be happy to drive him around to his car, but she just remembered one last thing she needed to buy. She said she would only be a few minutes; he could sit down in her car and wait for her; she would be as quick as she could be.

She hurried into the mall, and told a security guard what had happened; the guard came out to her car with her, but the man had left. They opened the trunk, took out his locked briefcase and took it down to the police station. The police opened it (ostensibly to look for ID so they could return it to the man). What they found was rope, duct tape, and knives. When the police checked her "flat" tire, there was nothing wrong with it; the air had simply been let out. It was obvious what the man's intention was, and obvious that he had carefully thought it out in advance. The woman was blessed to have escaped harm.

How much worse it would have been if she had children with her and had them wait in the car while the man fixed the tire, or if she had a baby strapped into a car seat? Or if she'd gone against her judgment and given him a lift?

One Glass of Milk

One day, a poor boy who was selling goods from door to door to pay his way through school, found he had only one thin dime left, and he was hungry. He decided he would ask for a meal at the next house. However, he lost his nerve when a lovely young woman opened the door.

Instead of a meal he asked for a drink of water. She thought he looked hungry so she brought him a large glass of milk. He drank it so slowly, And then asked, "How much do I owe you?"

You don't owe me anything," she replied. "Mother has taught us never to accept pay for a kindness."

He said, "Then I thank you from my heart."

As Howard Kelly left that house, he not only felt stronger physically, But his faith in God and man was strong also. He had been ready to give up and quit.

Many years later that same young woman became critically ill. The local doctors were baffled. They finally sent her to the big city, where they called in specialists to study her rare disease.

Dr. Howard Kelly was called in for the consultation. When he heard

Choose Wisely in Donating to Charities

by CA Attorney General Bill Lockyer

During this season of giving, many Californians make a heartfelt decision to say yes when contacted by a commercial fundraiser on behalf of a charity. However, givers should take precautions to assure that their hard-earned dollars are spent wisely.

Unfortunately, too many charities receive too few dollars from too many commercial fundraising efforts. A report I recently released shows that the average charity in 2003 received just over 40 percent of the revenue raised in donation campaigns run by commercial fundraisers. Approximately one-quarter of the campaigns provided nonprofit charities only 15 percent or less of the funds raised.

The Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance recommends that charities net 65 percent of the revenue raised from commercial fundraising campaigns. Of the 605 campaigns in California in 2003, only 148, less than a quarter, met that standard.

In order to help consumers make wise choices, my office has published a "Guide to Charitable Giving for Donors," available online at www.ag.ca.gov/charities. This guide provides tips on how to make an informed decision if you receive a call seeking donations to a charity.

Ask if the solicitor is working for a commercial fundraiser and is being paid to solicit. If so, ask for proof of registration with the Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts. By law, commercial fundraisers must disclose this information.

Ask what percentage of donations being raised is paying for fundraising expenses, and how much of your donation will be used for the program you want to support and how much for the charity's

the name of the town she came from, a strange light filled his eyes.

Immediately he rose and went down the hall of the hospital to her room. Dressed in his doctor's gown he went in to see her. He recognized her at once. He went back to the consultation room determined to do his best to save her life.

From that day he gave special attention to her case. After a long struggle, the battle was won.

Dr. Kelly requested the business office to pass the final bill to him for approval. He looked at it, and then wrote something on the edge and the bill was sent to her room. She feared to open it, for she was sure it would take the rest of her life to pay for it all. Finally she looked, and something caught her attention on the side of the bill. She read these words... "Paid in full with one glass of milk" (Signed) Dr. Howard Kelly.

administrative costs. California law requires solicitors to disclose this information, if asked.

Ask for the charity's name, address, telephone number, proof of tax exempt status and registration with Attorney General — in writing. A charity or fundraiser should give you materials outlining the charity's program services, how your donation will be used and proof that your contribution is tax-deductible.

If the solicitor tells you that the donation is for your local police, firefighter or other public safety agency, check directly with the agency to ensure that it is actually participating in the fundraising appeal.

Review the charity's financial disclosure reports on the same web site as above.

Charities with gross receipts of more than \$25,000 must file a financial accounting each year with the IRS and the Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts.

If, after your research, you decide to donate, make charitable contributions by writing a check to the name of the charity. Never make cash donations or give your credit card number to a telephone solicitor or in response to any unsolicited phone call you receive.

A law that I sponsored, which took effect January 1, 2005, requires that contracts between charities and commercial fundraisers for each solicitation campaign include specific protections and rights for nonprofits.

Many California communities depend on our generosity to fund vital services to those in need. With careful diligence, we can assure that we spend money designated to charity wisely.

For more information, visit www.ag.ca.gov/charities.

California Gas Prices Falling for Now

Retail gas prices in California continue to decline, according to the latest report from AAA of Northern California. The statewide average price of \$2.29 is down 32 cents from a month ago. Still, Californians are paying ten cents more than they did a year ago at this time.

"In the past week, the rate of decline has slowed to just a couple of cents," said AAA of Northern California spokesperson Michael Geeser. "That signals gas prices are stabilizing as the year comes to an end. But considering what Californians were paying for gas just a few months ago, these prices appear to be more tolerable."

A recent strengthening of oil and wholesale gas prices is being blamed for the slowdown in declining retail gas prices. Given the surge of crude oil prices, it seems unlikely the national average for unleaded gas will drop to the two-dollar level by the New Year, as predicted by several analysts.

Oil ministers from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries recently agreed to maintain production at the group's highest-ever levels - at least for now. OPEC's announcement coupled with cold winter weather could send crude oil higher by the end of the year.

"At this time of year, weather always plays a part in the price of gas. As the weather turns colder across the country, the demand goes up for energy, which includes oil. Colder than normal temperatures back east recently have driven crude oil over the sixty-dollar level for the first time in four weeks," said Geeser.

The most expensive average gas price in Northern California communities where AAA monitors fuel costs is in Yreka, where regular unleaded sells for \$2.49 per gallon. The lowest price among California cities tracked by AAA is in San Rafael, where gas costs an average of \$2.09 per gallon.

Throughout Northern California, the average price is \$2.25, down 31 cents from a month ago. In the Bay Area, the average price is \$2.22, a 33-cent decrease from November.

The nationwide average price is \$2.18 per gallon, down 12 cents from a month ago. The most expensive gas in the United States is in Wailuku, Hawaii where a gallon of regular unleaded costs an average of \$2.85.

In this month's survey, the most expensive unleaded gas within the lower 48 states is found in Yreka, California where the price is \$2.49 a gallon.

The least expensive gas in the U.S. is in Salt Lake City, Utah where the average price is \$1.92 per gallon.

One way consumers can reduce the amount of money they spend on fuel is to shop aggressively for the lowest price. AAA of Northern California has a tool that can help. Located online at www.aaa.com/gasprices, the AAA Fuel Finder has real time information on gas prices at more than 85,000 gas stations throughout the United States.

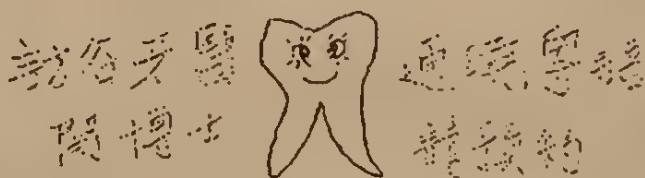
AAA's Fuel Gauge Report is the most comprehensive retail gasoline survey available, with over 85,000 self-serve stations surveyed every day nationwide. Data is provided in cooperation with OPIS Energy Group and Wright Express, LLC.

Contributing Stories To the Grapevine

Contributions to the Visitacion Valley Grapevine may be e-mailed to visvalley@earthlink.net or be sent to 50 Raymond Ave., San Francisco, CA 94134 by the 15th of the prior month of publication. Call (415) 467-9300 or Fax (415) 467-3757. The Grapevine office is located on the second floor of the Visitacion Valley Community Center.

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GRAPEVINE

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Published monthly by Visitacion Valley Community Center, 50 Raymond Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94134, (415) 467-9300. Fax: 467-3757; visvalley@earthlink.net. Web: <http://home.earthlink.net/~visvalley>
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Independent Claus: Adventures of a Mall Santa

by Rix Quinn
Larry Claus seemed destined for a holiday career. Even as a small child, he noticed his last name popping up all over the place each November.

Larry first met Santa (the one in the mall) when he was three. He's sure about that, because he'd just learned his own last name. "Look, Momma," he hollered that November as they watched workers set up the holiday display, "that sign's got my name on it, but they spelled my first name wrong."

That's when Momma told Larry all about the most famous Claus, the one who helped children's Christmas wishes come true. "But how does Santa know what children want?" Larry asked.

"Because they tell him" Momma explained, "In a few days, Santa will come here and sit in that big chair from 9 AM to 9 PM, except for lunch hour. You and the other children can tell him what you want for Christmas."

"Are you sure he's the real Santa?" asked Larry. "I saw another Santa at the grocery last week."

"Good question," Momma said. "Actually, Santa's got several helpers who look a lot like him. But they all work together to help children."

At that moment, Larry resolved to grow up to be just like Santa...or at least his administrative assistant.

Chapter Two

Every November, Larry constantly hounded his parents to take him to the mall. Once there, he'd hang out near Santa's chair in front of the plywood Christmas house covered with cotton snow (plus a few synthetic pinecones). He'd listen to what every kid asked for, and get ideas for more presents.

When Larry was ten, he visited Santa to present his usual gift list. That's the first time he asked for a job.

"Well, Larry," Santa said gently, "you're a little young. As you see, most of my helpers are adults."

"How many adults know all those new toy names?" Larry countered. "And how many will work for free? And how many can just look at some kid and tell if he's been good or bad?"

Santa couldn't answer all those questions, and besides that he had a splitting headache from hearing himself "Ho,ho,ho." So he sent the youngster straight to the Human Resources office, when Larry filled out a four-page application in crayon.

A couple days later, Larry got official news that his youth disqualified him. But the nice lady promised Larry that when he turned 16, he could start as a Santa's Helper Third Class, a training position with advancement potential.

Chapter Three

On his 16th birthday, Larry raced to the mall to claim his job. But he couldn't start then, because it was still July. They told him to come back November 1, but he showed up on Halloween just in case.

That's when the office issued Larry his official Santa's Helper suit – a red smock and weird-looking elf shoes. He reported for training three weeks later, just in time to see workers dismantle a nine-foot tall plastic talking turkey who kept repeating "Have a great Thanksgiving Day, and buy your turkey right away!"

Larry was one of the first ones there. He met the lady trainer, who wore an official-looking badge that said "Seasonal Events Coordinator."

"Hello," she said. "In the next six hours – with one hour off for lunch – you'll learn to manage one of the best holiday exhibits in this state. We will teach you to keep children in line and distribute melting candy without staining your smock."

Larry never realized so many things could go wrong at a Christmas display! He'd never thought about what to do if some child

knocked over a wooden reindeer, stuffed fake snow in his ears, or threw up on Santa's shoes.

Larry's job as a Third Class Helper required him to periodically wipe kid spit off Santa's face, and comb out Santa's beard when tiny fingers tangled it up. But Larry learned quickly, and by the next year advanced to Second Class.

That job – snapping instant photos of children perched on Santa's lap – was toughest of all. Larry discovered that fast-moving kids blurred pictures, requiring expensive retakes. And he learned that Santa cannot smile with a candy cane in his nostril.

Chapter Four

After two years as a Second Class Helper, mall management promoted Larry to First Class. Larry – by then a college freshman – quickly mastered the three critical tasks of this position: (1) keep the line moving; (2) keep the parents happy, and (3) if you fail at tasks 1 and 2, do not cry louder than the children.

One night in mid-December, Larry faced his first real emergency. Santa apparently got hold of some old popcorn at lunch, and by 6 PM experienced multiple explosions in his little round belly. Unable to work, he cried out to Larry for help.

Larry quickly strapped on the basic equipment – artificial facial hair, stomach pillow, and red leisure suit – and hopped into Santa's giant chair.

For the next three hours he listened to nearly 400 children – and three disoriented mall employees – describe the loot they expected December 25.

All that time, Larry kept saying to himself, "This is the job I want for the rest of my life."

Chapter Five

Larry's life detoured from Santa's community after graduation. He took a job as an archeologist digging for dinosaur bones at several excavation sites. But late each night when he curled up in his sleeping bag, his thoughts wandered back to the mall, to the job he really dug.

Finally, on his 25th birthday he decided to become a career Santa. But – since again, it was July – he could not act until his regional Santa School opened in October.

The other enrollees sweated basic training, but not Larry. A Christ-

mas veteran, he quickly mastered the belly laugh and sprouted his own dark whiskers, which many said were nearly as thick as his great-grandma's on his father's side.

Larry never forgot the last session, when his instructor tackled the tricky question "Is Santa real?" The students – all very real, mostly middle-aged jolly guys – finally concluded that Santa's spirit lived in everyone with a good heart...and especially those with a good heart and red suit.

After a festive awards dinner where Larry won the coveted "Youngest Guy with the Oldest Face" trophy, he scheduled a meeting with the school principal to discuss job opportunities.

The principal showed Larry a big file folder full of Santa requests. "You've got all sorts of options," he said. "Department stores, malls, car dealers, TV stations, and recreation centers are all looking for Santas right now.

"But for a young guy like you, I suggest you become an independent Claus. You're not confined to a single town, and you might even want to work two Santa jobs during the season."

Larry looked through the folder, and – surprise! – found that his hometown mall needed a Santa. He called them immediately. They remembered him from Christmas past, and offered him the job.

Chapter Six

Larry got home November 20, and saw that the mall had changed dramatically in six years. He also noticed that the giant plastic turkey still blabbed away, but his message had changed.

To make the turkey "more relevant," some marketing genius placed a tiny speaker in his mouth, and positioned a guy with a microphone (hidden by artificial shrubbery) a few feet away.

Now the turkey made small talk with anybody who walked by. The quality of that conversation was determined by the brainpower of the guy holding the mike. Larry listened for a minute, then concluded that turkeys are not meant to talk.

He reported to Human Resources to claim his Santa suit. At this mall, he was reminded, Santa officially arrived the Monday before Thanksgiving.

Larry showed up at 8AM that morning, and climbed into a cardboard sleigh located in the food court. When the doors opened, his "reindeer" (actually ten weight lifters with antlers from the mall's fitness center) dragged him toward the main entrance, where he was supposed to greet the crowd.

Suddenly, the lead reindeer pulled a hamstring and hit the ground hard. The other guys fell over him, dragging Larry out of the sleigh and onto the condiments table. He escaped injury, but smelled like he'd been sampling onion cologne.

Luckily, the rest of the day went better, as did the following three weeks. Larry settled into the comfortable Santa routine he'd grown to love. He even renewed his friendship with Margie, a former classmate now assigned as the Santa's Workshop security guard.

Yeah, life is good, thought Larry. But that all changed five days before Christmas.

Chapter Seven

December 20 dawned gray and overcast (like most scenes in scary movies). Larry took his seat in the big Santa chair, and began to greet children. The first boy in line – about 15 and probably skipping school – just wanted his picture made with Santa. Larry smiled dutifully while the kid made a stupid face. Larry received a half-hearted "Thanks, dude!" from the teen, who liked the picture so much he raced straight to the poster shop to order a giant enlargement.

The next person, a girl about 12, presented Larry a printout of 43 items, plus their retail prices. "This kid is high maintenance" Larry thought as he scanned the list and quickly computed a total well over \$1500.

The third child in line, a tiny brunette, hesitated before climbing into Larry's lap. "What's your name," Larry asked.

"It's Erin," she said softly. "And I just want one thing."

"What's that?" Larry asked.

"A little sister," Erin replied. Larry had fielded this request a hundred times, and responded with his stock answer.

"Ho, ho, ho," he chuckled, "You better talk to your parents about that one."

Erin didn't laugh. "I already have a little sister," she said. "I just want her back."

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Larry's quizzical look brought the mother over. Erin's mom and dad separated some six months before, Mom said. She kept nine-year-old Erin and Dad took her seven-year-old sister Leslie.

Erin's visit haunted Larry until lunch, when he explained the episode to Margie. "Listen," she reassured, "there's nothing Santa can do about that. They'll either get back together or they won't. It's just not too likely Erin will get her Christmas wish."

Only two evenings later, just before closing, Larry greeted a dark-eyed child named Leslie. Looking up, he noticed that Leslie's dad was with her.

"So, what can I get for you this year?" Larry asked. "I don't know," Leslie replied. "I usually want whatever my big sister wants, and I haven't seen her for a long time."

Larry suspected what the answer to his next question might be. He was just afraid to ask it. But then he said to himself, "What the heck is a Santa Claus for if he can't solve an occasional problem?"

"Leslie," he said softly, "could your sister's name be Erin?"

"Wow," the girl smiled. "How did you know? Are you, like, magic?"

"Maybe," Larry said. "Could you ask your Dad to come over here?"

Chapter Eight

Larry asked a Helper to show Leslie the Workshop while he chatted with Dad. "Listen," he whispered to the father, "this is absolutely none of my business, but your other daughter Erin visited me two days ago, and said all she wanted for Christmas was her little sister."

The father nodded. "I really want us to get back together," he confided. "And I think my wife wants it, too. I ran into her sister yesterday, and she said the same thing."

"We were both working long hours, but for some reason we just quit talking. And separating the girls from each other was a major mistake."

"I know you. I shouldn't be telling you this," the man said, turning his head away. But he kept talking.

"I call my wife all the time. I leave messages. But my wife – Jan – well, she's very independent. She never, ever calls me back."

"Look," Larry said, "I'm no psychologist. And for sure I'm not supposed to do this. But what if I – uh, I mean Santa – called her for you?"

See Page 7



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The Sensible Environmentalist

Indoor Air Quality Puts Health at Risk

by Dr. Patrick Moore

Dear Dr. Moore:

Could the air in my home be making me sick?

It's possible. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, indoor air can be up to 10 times more polluted than the air outside, even in the most industrialized cities. This poses a significant health risk—especially when you consider that most of us spend at least 12 hours a day in our homes—which is why the EPA has listed indoor air quality as one of its top five environmental issues.

Part of the problem is that we've become increasingly efficient at sealing our homes to save energy, which has the unfortunate side effect of trapping pollutants inside. Proper ventilation is essential for diluting emissions and transporting them outdoors.

Most people don't realize how many sources of pollution there are in a typical home—from chemicals in cleansers and solvents, to mold, tobacco smoke, mites, dander and pollen. There are also what's known as "combustion" pollutants, produced when fuels are burned in fireplaces, furnaces, stoves and other

appliances. These include (among others) carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and sulfur dioxide.

Depending on the pollutant and level of exposure, health effects may appear immediately or over the long term, and can range from irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, to headaches, fatigue, heart disease and cancer. Whether someone gets sick depends on their age—children and the elderly face the greatest risk—and their overall health.

The best way to improve indoor air quality is to eliminate the sources of pollution. Relatively simple ways to do this include using chemicals outdoors or in a ventilated workspace, washing bedding and drapes regularly, choosing natural materials such as wood over carpets and preventing mold with a few well-placed dehumidifiers. For combustion pollutants, venting is essential. But, given the space limitations of this column, I suggest that anyone serious about making improvements visit the EPA (www.epa.gov) and Green Building Initiative (www.thegbi.org) Web sites for more detailed information.

Pollutants in your home have a direct effect on the health and well-being of your family. Fortunately, with so many common sense options, anyone can improve their indoor air quality and make their home more livable.

Dr. Patrick Moore has been a leader of the environmental movement for more than 30 years. A co-founder of Greenpeace, he holds a PhD in ecology and a BSc in forest biology. Questions can be sent to Patrick@SensibleEnvironmentalist.com. NAPS

New Survey Shows Many Motorists Desperate for Driving Alternatives

We all know high gas prices have people fuming, but what are motorists really doing about it? And who do they feel is responsible for their pain at the pump? For the first time, a new survey from AAA of Northern California examines drivers' attitudes about our reliance on gasoline and explores possible solutions.

"Bottom line, our members are telling us they're fed up," said AAA of Northern California spokesperson Jenny Mack. "Eighty-three percent of those surveyed say it's very important for American drivers to reduce their reliance on gasoline and right now they don't think anyone out there is doing enough to help make this happen."

Overwhelmingly, participants blamed oil companies and the federal government for not doing enough to reduce gasoline dependence. But people took a hard look at themselves as well, with 81 percent agreeing they could be doing more too.

Car manufacturers didn't escape blame either, with 79 percent of respondents saying that automakers have been too slow to develop and sell hybrid vehicles.

"Our survey shows people believe it's time to take action on this issue," said Mack. "The large majority of respondents feel U.S. energy policy and the development of alternative

fuels is lagging. Sixty-eight percent feel there hasn't been enough done to raise the mileage requirements for all types of passenger vehicles."

Many people seem to feel trapped by the rising price of gasoline—they would like to drive less, but feel they can't. This is especially true for commuters. Thirty-four percent of commuters surveyed said it doesn't matter how high gas prices get; even at \$4.99 a gallon they simply can't choose to drive less.

People driving for personal or family-related reasons have a little more flexibility. Twenty-five percent say they've already cut down on their driving. Another 29 percent will drive less with gas prices at \$3.00 to \$3.99.

For those who are reducing the miles they drive, most are doing so by consolidating trips (73 percent) and driving their most fuel efficient vehicle (65 percent).

Interestingly, the high price of gas may be good for some people's health. Thirty-nine percent say they are walking more instead of driving.

About one in three people are choosing to carpool, take public transit, bike or telecommute.

Switching to hybrid electric vehicles and more fuel efficient gasoline powered vehicles appears to be the solution for most of those surveyed. Sixty-six percent say the next car they buy or lease is very likely to be more fuel efficient and 35 percent say they're considering buying or leasing a hybrid.

Of those who are considering a hybrid, the reasons are both practical and idealistic. Saving money on gas was the number one reason cited at 86 percent. Protecting the environment and reducing dependence on foreign oil also ranked high, at 71 percent and 70 percent respectively.

Hybrids are clearly not the solution for everyone. The majority (56 percent) have no plans to purchase a hybrid at this time. Survey participants who won't consider buying a hybrid most commonly cited the need for the technology to improve first as their main reason for staying away. Recognition that hybrid cars tend to cost more than they'll save on gas also ranked high at 35 percent. Lack of cargo or passenger space was the third most cited reason for staying away.

"What we're seeing here is a real craving for information. By a 3-to-1 margin, people say they want to know more about alternative fuels and hybrid-electric cars. It might not be the right option for everyone right now, but even the people who told us they don't currently want to buy a hybrid vehicle are interested in learning more," said Mack.

Book Reviews

Life Tips from a Master Motivator

Here's good news for anyone who would rather live the American dream than just dream about it. Critics report that a new book, *Ordinary to Extraordinary* (Life Motivations, \$24.95) by self-made millionaire Step Jones, actually provides a road map to identify what you need to succeed in business and in all aspects of your life.

The book helps readers discover how to:

- Find the secret to turning goals into achievable plans instead of empty dreams.
- Develop the 15 characteristics that every truly successful person has.
- Identify your own core values so you get what you truly want in life.
- Take control of change in your life and make your own choices rather than just living in reaction to what life throws your way.
- Understand how having the right mental models gives you the proper self-image to take advantage of opportunities as they come your way.
- See how your risk tolerance is controlled by your attitude, and how that balance can limit you or open your mind to success.

Step Jones is a millionaire businessman, philosopher, life coach and founder of the Beverly Hills-based Life Motivations Institute, which holds training seminars and teleconferences for people who also want to become certified life coaches.

Step put his degree in Philosophy to good use by studying all the theories of modern success. He was then able to identify and explain what people really need to propel their lives forward personally and professionally.

His ability to share his "Success Philosophy" with his employees enabled Jones to become wealthy himself, by making him a more effective manager and executive. Jones' message is simple: when he says "I am just like you," he means that if he was able to turn himself into a success, so can you.

In addition to *Ordinary to Extraordinary*, Step Jones offers a DVD/CD set called "Life Coach in a Box." Both are available by calling 800-297-7887 or visiting www.LifeMotivations.com.

A New Chapter for many readers is a new book that provides a road map to identify what you need to do to succeed in life.

Parenting School

Chances are, after finishing school you thought you'd never have to worry about geometry or chemistry again. Then you had kids—and they needed help with their homework.

A new series of books will help. They give parents tips on helping their kids handle math homework and science projects. Here's a closer look:

An Art of Science

With the trend toward hands-on learning, more and more children have to complete science projects. *CliffsNotes Parent's Crash Course to Elementary School Science Fair Projects* (Wiley, \$16.99) helps parents and kids create last-minute masterpieces. Chapters are grouped by science subject, with two-page spreads devoted to each project. Each project idea includes step-by-step instructions and discussion topics.

Make Math Add Up

CliffsNotes Parent's Crash Course to Elementary School Math (Wiley, \$16.99) offers thorough coverage of elementary math topics including integers, whole numbers, adding, subtracting, multiplying, decimals, percentages, powers, exponents, roots and measurements. Features include model problems to help parents learn where their children need help, sample problems with step-by-step solutions and a glossary of terms.

NAPS

San Francisco to Add Clean-Air Vehicles to City's Taxi Fleet

Mayor Gavin Newsom on Dec. 13 joined environmental leaders to announce a major new package of financial incentives to boost the number of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and hybrid taxis serving San Francisco.

Natural gas vehicles reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 30 percent and cost much less than gasoline powered vehicle to operate—directly benefiting both the environment and taxi drivers responsible for the costs of fuel. Hybrid vehicles provide equal benefit, reducing air pollution, fuel consumption and driver expenses.

Incentives will be provided by

Clean Energy, "North America's Leader in Clean Transportation" of approximately \$16,000 per CNG taxi. CAST, an alliance of groups dedicated to reducing urban pollution, asthma and U.S. dependence on oil by transforming public transportation, will provide resources aimed at increasing the number of hybrid taxis.

"When government, private industry and the public work hand-in-hand to promote environment health, we can make real progress," said Mayor Newsom of the new incentive package.

In addition, the City offers benefits for clean air taxis, including

once-per-shift front-of-the-line privileges at SFO and waivers for airport trip fees. San Francisco Taxicab Commission allows clean air taxis one additional year of service provided they pass mechanical inspections.

Since 1999, when CNG vehicles first entered San Francisco's taxi fleet, SFO has administered clean air grants to reduce the vehicle purchase price.

The San Francisco taxi fleet currently contains 140 CNG vehicles and will soon have 30 hybrid vehicles out of a total fleet size of 1381.

Essay Contest Winner At Valley Middle School

Uchechi Amaechi, a seventh-grader at Visitacion Valley Middle School (VVMS) was recently named winner of a student essay contest on Violence in the Media sponsored by the Violence Prevention Collaborative.

Open to all grades at VVMS, students were asked: "How has violence affected your life? Does violence in the media make people more violent? How should the problem of violence in the media be addressed?"

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Watercooler Counsel

by Rich Proulx

Transfer Whiplash

Watercooler Counsel is a column to help employees and employers navigate the tangle of workplace laws. Get practical answers straight from the source: the people who enforce the law (not the lawyers!).

Q: I transferred from West Virginia to Walnut Creek for a managerial position with my employer 2 years ago. Our client who accounts for 80 percent of our business told my boss that he does not want to work with a woman. As a result, my boss transferred me to San Francisco two months ago. Now he said there is not enough work for me here and wants me to relocate to the Midwest. I don't want to move. Can he fire me if I refuse to transfer? - YoYo No More, San Francisco, CA

Antiques & Collectibles

All About Ice Tongs

by Anita Gold

Q: My husband Freddy, wants to collect ice tongs like those his grandfather used in the 1920s to deliver ice. How can he tell them from implements that may look the same but were used for different purposes? Betty Williams, Hammond, IN

A: Ice tongs dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, ranged from huge heavy ones designed to carry a block of ice weighing as much as 200 pounds to lightweight "family size" types. The smaller tongs have a span of 11 1/2 to 19-inches; "wagon size" tongs have as much as a 24 or 30-inch span.

Styles included the Boston pattern with red handles; the Cincinnati, or chain pattern, designed with two chain links at the end of each handle; the patent link, designed with a two-inch link at either end of the grip; the Invincible, designed with round grips; and the Hand Made, with three links of chain at each end of its grip handle.

Especially desirable are tongs with a squarish handle, like the kind on an egg beater, that worked on a spring to grip a 14-inch block of ice; when closed it could fold up. Other desirable tongs included blacksmith-wrought ones with pigtail-shaped grips that could command a hefty price depending on workmanship and age.

Manufactured tongs can range in price from \$10 to \$30 or more, depending on features, size, and type. Implements that resemble ice tongs include railroad tie lifters or "tie tongs," which measure about 29-inches long and have longer handles than ice tongs.

Aside from what they were originally intended to be used for, ice tongs can be used for other purposes too such as schlepping or dragging heavy items (that one can't carry) to the garbage cans.

If you know of any stories, poems, songs, or jokes, relating to iremen that you'd care to submit to be included in a later column, be my guest. Back in the good old days when the ice-man came in his truck to deliver ice, were you one of the kids he'd give a chip of ice to on a hot summer day?

Q: Where can I find information on various types of old clocks and their value such as swinging arm clocks and other fancy types? Rose Benson, Beaver, PA

A: A new book you'll love that pictures, describes in detail, and covers all types of fascinating clocks is the *Antique Trader Clocks Price Guide - Including all types of clocks - 17th through 20th century* edited by Kyle Husfloen and contributing editor Mark Moran, available for \$17.95 from Krause Publications, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990-0001. Or phone (800) 258-0929 toll-free to order and reference item number ATCL1.

Write Anita Gold, P.O. Box 597401, Chicago, IL 60659. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope with a copy of this column and the name of the paper in which it appears for a reply.

A: He can. But it would not be a wise move. It was illegal for your employer to have transferred you because a client preferred to work with a man. Customer preference is no excuse for discriminatory treatment. Regarding your forced relocation, an employer could terminate an employee for refusing to transfer, because California is an at-will employment state. So, this means an employer can terminate an employee for no reason. Your situation is different, because your termination is a direct consequence of your employer's prior discriminatory transfer. If your employer terminates you, it would be illegal. If you wanted to file a discrimination complaint, you could contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) at 1-800-669-4000.

Q: I work on the computer all day. Lately, my back has been killing me. I'd like to get a new chair for my desk. Is my employer required to provide me with one? -Aching Architect, Fresno, CA

A: Before asking your employer for a new chair, I recommend you take a look at the website for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) at www.osha.gov. Their interactive "e-tools" helps you to assess your computer workstation for ergonomic compliance and help determine what equipment you might need. Now that you have gathered your shopping list, I hate to break it to you, but your employer is not required to provide you with ergo-

nomicequipment. Of course, many employers choose to do so to avoid potential workers compensation costs. There is an exception if you have a disability, which under California law is a physical or mental impairment that limits

you in a major life activity - such as sitting. In that case, you have a right to a reasonable accommodation from your employer, which could include an ergonomic chair.

Q: I heard there's a new state law requiring training on sexual harassment. Does everyone need it? What is the training and where do I get it? -Jerry C., Stockton, CA

A: You don't have much time left! Last year, the California Legislature passed AB 1825 which requires employers with 50 or more employees to provide their supervisors, with two hours of sexual harassment training by January 1, 2006. An internet search shows many private organizations are offering the training. The CA Department of Fair Employment and Housing and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission have also teamed up to present this training. You can register at www.eettraining.eeoc.gov. Rich and his team of government experts meticulously research your questions every two weeks. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the occupations with the greatest number of injuries were laborers, heavy truck drivers and nurse's aides. The most common problem? Back strains and sprains. Send your questions to richard.proulx@eeoc.gov, whose day job is Enforcement Supervisor for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (www.eeoc.gov). Identifying information in the questions may be fictional.

Recipe Corner

Double Cheddar Green Bean Casserole

1 package (1.8 ounces) white sauce mix; 2-1/4 cups milk; 12 cups shredded Cheddar cheese; 1 package (16 ounces) frozen cut green beans, thawed; 1-1/3 cups French's Cheddar French Fried Onions

1. Prepare white sauce mix according to package directions using 2-1/4 cups milk. Add 1 cup cheese and stir until melted.

2. Place beans and 2/3 cup French Fried Onions in 12 -quart baking dish. Pour cheese sauce over beans and mix gently to combine.

3. Bake at 350F for 25 minutes or until heated through; stir. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and onions. Bake 5 minutes or until onions are golden. Makes 6 servings.

Lemon Blueberry Swirl Cake

1 package (17.5 oz.) Krusteaz Fat Free Blueberry Muffin Mix (1 pouch muffin mix and 1 can blueberries); 1 cup water; 1 cup (8 oz.) lite cream cheese or Neufchatel, softened; 1/4 cup sugar; 1 egg; 1 teaspoon lemon zest.

Lemon Glaze: 1 2 cups powdered sugar, sifted; 2 tablespoons lemon juice

Preheat oven to 375F. In medium bowl, combine muffin mix and water. Drain and rinse blueberries. Gently fold into batter. Spoon batter into a lightly greased 9-inch cake pan or 13x9x2-inch pan. Set aside. Place cream cheese, sugar, egg and lemon zest in separate bowl. Mix on

VISITACION VALLEY GRAPEVINE - JANUARY 2006 - 5

low speed of electric mixer until smooth. Drop spoonfuls of cream cheese mixture evenly over batter. Swirl with a knife for marbled effect. Bake 9-inch pan 38-42 minutes or 13x9x2-inch pan 25-30 minutes. Cool 20 minutes. Remove from pan and cool completely on wire rack. Drizzle with lemon glaze.

For Glaze: Combine powdered sugar and lemon juice until smooth. Drizzle over cooled cake. Makes 12 servings.

Avocado and Beef Torta

1 ripe Mexican Hass avocado; 1 tablespoon lime juice; 2 teaspoon salt, divided; Pinch ground red pepper; 2 teaspoon ground cumin; 2 teaspoon chili powder; 1 pound flank steak; 1 loaf Italian bread; 1 cup tomato salad greens; 8 thin tomato slices.

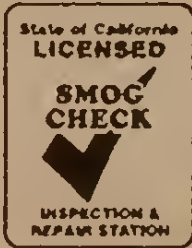
Preheat broiler. Cut avocado lengthwise around the pit; twist halves to separate; strike pit with a knife blade and pull to remove; scoop out pulp; place in a small bowl. Mash avocado; stir in lime juice, 1/4 teaspoon of the salt and the red pepper; set aside. In a cup, combine cumin, chili powder and remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt. Rub seasoning mixture over steak; place in a broiler pan. Broil steak until cooked as desired (about 5 minutes on each side for medium). Remove to a cutting board; let rest for 5 minutes; cut diagonally in thin slices. Split bread horizontally. Spread avocado mixture on top half; layer salad greens, beef and tomato on bottom of loaf; close sandwich. Cut crosswise in 4 pieces.

NAPS

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Joe Leland around the neighborhood

***3rd Street Light Rail Opening Delayed Again:** Due to construction delays, we shouldn't expect to see trains running along Bayshore Boulevard until late 2006. The project is also over budget some \$21 million. In context however, this is only about 3 percent of the budgeted amount. For more information: Third Street Light Rail Construction Office, 501 Cesar Chavez Street, Suite 200 (near Third Street) San Francisco, CA 94124, Phone: (415) 641-2000.

***Emergency Preparedness Fair:** Fire? Flood? Earthquake? Are you ready? Assemblyman Leland Y. Yee invites the entire community to the Emergency Preparedness Fair, Saturday Jan. 21, 2006 at Visitation Valley Middle School, 450 Raymond Ave., from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Take time now so your family will be safe tomorrow! There will be fully-stocked emergency backpack giveaways. For more information, call (415) 557-2312.

***Candy Canes on Leland Avenue:** The festive candy cane wrapping on the parking meters along Leland Avenue are a gift to the community from the Visitation Valley business Opportunities and Outreach to Merchants program.

***Got email?:** Want to stay current on Valley meetings and events? Send an email to the Bob "Keeper of the List" Lehman requesting regular email updates: rlpb@sbcglobal.net

A Year of Progress in Visitation Valley

From Page 1

***Local Chefs Provide Cooking Classes:** Local chefs from a new program called Nextcourse are now providing cooking and nutrition classes for families living in Visitation Valley.

***Funding for Valley Parks:** Herz Playground, Coffman Pool and the Greenway Senior Park in Visitation Valley were among 11 neighborhood parks and recreation centers in San Francisco to share in almost \$16 million in supplemental funds to help with the City's Recreation and Park capital improvements projects.

***New Wellness Program at Burton High School:** Mayor Newsom on May 12 visited Burton High School where he was joined by students, school administrators and San Francisco Unified School District representatives in a ceremony to celebrate the opening of the Burton High Wellness Program.

***Summer Jam 2 at Herz Playground:** More than 350 local residents attended the Visitation Valley Violence Prevention Collaborative's Community Summer Jam 2 on June 4 at Herz Playground. Through interactive activities, sporting events and music, the event celebrated peaceful coexistence in the neighborhood.

***Mayor Newsom Presented with First Florence Friedman Award:** Visitation Valley Community Center (VVCC) presented its first annual Florence Friedman Award to Mayor Newsom during an Awards Gala on July 13 at the Hotel Nikko in downtown San Francisco.

***Better Streets Program Announced in Visitation Valley:** Delivering on his commitment to make real, immediate and sustainable improvements to enhance and preserve quality of life in San Francisco,

Mayor Newsom on Aug. 11 unveiled Phase II of the City's Clean and Green Initiative: the Better Streets Program in Visitation Valley at Hans Schiller Plaza on Leland Avenue.

***More Space for FCSC:** Now in its fourth year under the administration of Visitation Valley Community Center, Inc., the Family and Children Services Center (FCSC) more than tripled its service space at the Leland Avenue storefront after receiving a grant from the Bella Vista Foundation. The added space enhanced FCSC's efforts in sponsoring workshops, support groups and social activities for community residents.

***Leland Avenue Design Workshops:** Neighborhood residents who live on and use Leland Avenue had an opportunity to formulate opinions on its forthcoming improvement at the first two of three design workshops on Oct. 22 and Dec. 10 at the Visitation Valley Elementary School auditorium.

***Rob Reiner Visits Visitation Valley:** Well-known children's advocate Rob Reiner announced the completion of signature gathering for the Preschool for All initiative on Nov. 17 at the Visitation Valley Clubhouse on Leland Avenue.

***Casa Lopez Honored at Business Awards:** One of Leland Avenue's newest businesses, Casa Lopez, was honored on Oct. 27 at the first annual San Francisco Neighborhood Business Awards Reception sponsored by Urban Solutions and the San Francisco Examiner.

***Safe Halloween Family Celebration:** Children and their parents lined up outside the gates of Hans Schiller Park on Oct. 29 as they waited to collect treats and important information from booths at the Second Annual Safe Halloween Family Celebration.

Composting and Gardening Classes in January

Classes are held on Saturdays at the Garden for the Environment, 7th Avenue at Lawton Street. Call 731-5627 for a more information or to pre-register.

***Jan. 7: Urban Composting, 10 a.m. to 12 noon -** Don't let your food scraps go to waste! The City found that nearly 40 percent of San Francisco's residential garbage is valuable organic material that can be composted into rich fertilizer for your soil. Learn what you can do to reduce waste, save money and help the environment. This class will cover the basics of both backyard and worm composting. Garden for the Environment, 7th Ave. at Lawton Street. Free!

***Jan. 14: Winter Pruning of Fruit Trees, 10 a.m. to 12 noon -** Fruit actually grows on trees! Join the essential theory and hands-on practice of winter pruning for fruit trees. Learn about picking the best varieties for San Francisco, as well as planting and pruning for productivity. Bring sharp pruning tools if you have them. \$15. Pre-registration required.

***Jan. 21: Growing Roses Organically, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.** Want gorgeous roses in San Francisco without those toxic chemicals? Learn how to grow healthy and beautiful roses without the use of synthetic pesticides or fertilizers. Covered will be varieties of roses that thrive in our foggy climate, as well as how to best prune and care for them throughout the year. Pre-registration required. This workshop is part of a Resource Efficient Landscaping Education Program. Free!

***Jan. 28: Winter Pruning, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. -** Always wondered whether you're pruning the right plant, the right way, at the right time? Come learn the basics of pruning for all of your landscape needs including which plants are best to prune now to encourage vigorous spring growth. With appropriate pruning techniques, you can minimize your pest and disease problems, promote fruiting and flowering, and encourage healthy, productive plants. Pre-registration required. This workshop is part of a Resource Efficient Landscaping Education Program. Free!

Summary of Ideas from First Leland Avenue Community Workshop

The first community workshop "A New Leland Avenue" took place at the Visitation Valley Elementary School on Oct. 22. More than 50 participants attended a visual presentation by the consultant team and then broke into seven groups for hands on exercises with facilitators.

The discussion resulted in the ideas summarized below.

Existing Conditions

Workshop participants described existing conditions on Leland Avenue as improving but still "stark, drab and uninviting, with neither color nor green," the street's look is perceived as "run-down." Participants identified vacancy and litter problems as causes of this perception.

Participants said they use the street mostly to fulfill daily needs, utilizing businesses such as bakeries, markets, cafes, other "one-stop errands," the post office, and the library. The produce store is highly used and residents enjoy its outdoor displays. However, the street is not perceived as a place to stroll down or hang around.

The public resources such as the library or Schiller plaza are seen as often unavailable; according to most participants, library hours should be longer and the plaza should be more open to the public.

The evening hours are not active along Leland; many participants pointed to the "unattractive lighting" and lack of appropriate pedestrian lighting as contributing to the street's perceived lack of safety. Participants also noted that businesses close too early (6 or 7 p.m.) and there are no destinations to attract people at night.

In spite of some of the above negative connotations the street is still positively considered as the center of Visitation Valley, "the gateway to the neighborhood," known for its "metal work, greenway and artwork."

General Concepts

Several broad themes emerged at the workshop for the design of Leland Avenue, including:

"The use of sustainable paving materials and plantings to manage stormwater runoff."

"A design palette for Leland Avenue that is unique, 'artistic, expressive,' that will use colors and motifs taken from the existing art of the Greenway and the metal gate of the clubhouse; some people mentioned the colors of the Third Street rail as another potential source of inspiration."

"Some participants mentioned the need for consistency of tree planting and a lively design that expresses activity on the street and will be integrated with the future development of the Schlage Lock site."

"A design that creates 'destinations' and is developed around 'little pockets of activities.'"

"A design that promotes a 'village feel,' and reflects the idea of 'people, cultures and parts of the neighborhood' coming together, celebrating diverse ethnicities."

"Street improvements should be coordinated with economic development."

"People would like to use Leland Avenue as a community space."

"Create a self-sustaining, walkable area with all services and stores nearby."

"Continue the efforts of the Greenway."

"Engage the existing youth population."

Identity Slogans

Participants were asked to come up with a 'slogan' for a redesigned Leland Avenue. The slogans they came up with include:

"Downtown Visitation Valley"

"A River of Green in the City"

"Visitation Valley's Main Street"

"Vis Valley Village"

"Going Downtown Leland!"

"Bring Back Leland!"

"Living on Leland!"

"Leland Avenue: an inviting family and community resource"

"In addition to a slogan, one group suggested creating a logo as an identity symbol for the new Leland Avenue."

Model Street Examples

Some groups suggested looking at other similar streets or areas in San Francisco or the larger Bay Area to get ideas about character, style, or activities. Other streets participants used as examples included:

"Cortland Street, which has an anchor store and associated small stores"

"24th street in the Mission district, however, it was noted that 24th street has a greater public transit presence than Leland Avenue."

"Nico and Market Streets"

"Grand Avenue, in Downtown South San Francisco"

"West Portal"

"Embarcadero Farmers Market"

Management and Programs

In addition to design considerations, many participants mentioned management strategies and programs that would improve conditions on Leland Avenue. These include:

"An organized cleaning effort" that can happen on a regular schedule.

"An active, creative programming of Schiller plaza, including: weekend programs, a 'Children's Art Sale with proceeds going to children's charity,' a music calendar, and/or a farmers market."

"A 'Merchants' Street Fair' event that could happen with a temporary closure of the street."

Design Ideas

Planting and Trees

Sustainable techniques for water management and for creating a sustainable street were mentioned, including:

"Storm drain management"

"Porous sidewalks"

"Environmentally-certified street paving materials"

Trees were seen as an important element of greening. Participants suggested "native trees," trees with thin canopies, and trees that can block the wind. They also suggested to "plant trees in clusters" at corners to create small public spaces, and to choose tree and planting types that reflects the landscaping of the Greenway.

Some participants expressed the potential concern of planting trees whose roots will break sidewalks.

Other forms of planting were mentioned, such as "continuing the planter box program," introducing trellises with instant plants," or adding a planted strip at the sidewalk edge. Groups stressed the idea of maintaining new plantings and trees once installed.

Participants mentioned that tree grates could be used as opportunities for art.

Sidewalks and Paving

Participants showed interest in having bulb-outs at specific locations. Potential key locations were indicated as Leland and Cora, Leland and Rutland—defined as the most problematic and unsafe of the intersections of the project area—and Leland and Bayshore Boulevard.

All groups agreed that repaving the sidewalk would make a great difference; some added that mosaics by children, historic markers and other art installations could enhance the design of the street.

Lighting

As many people defined the lack of appropriate lighting as one of the biggest concerns for the avenue, they also recommended that pedestrian lighting be introduced along the avenue as part of the new streetscape.

Participants generally felt that the new lighting needs to be "attractive," at pedestrian level and that it would probably encourage businesses to stay open late and would promote a sense of safety. One group mentioned Ocean Avenue as a nice model for pedestrian lighting.

A few groups suggested installing lighting on buildings and in the sidewalk at specific locations.

Seating

Many participants agreed with the need to provide seating, especially at specific locations such as bulb outs, "in front of cafes and in front of the library."

Some participants were nervous that benches would attract loitering. A few suggested anti-loitering benches.

Overhead Wires/ Undergrounding

Workshop participants stated the urgency of undergrounding the existing overhead wires and stressed that timing with the streetscape is crucial. They felt that no streetscape construction should happen before the undergrounding of the utilities.

Pedestrian Circulation/ Bicycles

People generally felt that crosswalks were poorly marked and that they were in need of repaving. Many participants mentioned adding color to crosswalks as a way to beautify the street.

Mid-block crosswalks were not seen as needed, except in front of the library and in front of the school.

Bike racks were seen as a way to encourage bicycle riding along Leland but people generally agreed that there is no need for a bicycle lane. One group mentioned providing a shuttle services for seniors who have problems walking.

Traffic Flow

Few major changes to traffic flow were discussed. However, one group considered the option of a one-way street with Raymond as opposite one-way.

Another group asked considering closure of first three blocks of Leland, mentioning that temporary closure of such blocks could also

be an alternative.

Participants generally favored exploring traffic calming ideas, and felt that cars should respect pedestrians more than they actually do. In particular Rutland was seen as a very dangerous intersection, "with buses and fast cars."

The Post Office was identified as "the most congested spot along the avenue;" one group asked if a drive-through post office box could be a possibility.

Parking

Almost every group stated that there is no parking shortage today on Leland Avenue. However, some felt that residents should be encouraged to park on side residential streets to allow stores clientele to use the meter parking.

A few groups saw parking consolidation as a possibility ("reutilize Bank of America parking lot"), especially after the Schlage-Lock development and the new library will be built.

Some felt that double parking (especially in front of the post office) and parking on the sidewalk are current problems and that they should be addressed in the new plan.

A few groups mentioned introducing perpendicular parking on one side of Leland Avenue, or along Peabody Street, especially if the street will be turned into a one-way street. Some objected that perpendicular parking might not be safe on Leland.

Art

All groups saw public art as a way of creating "uniqueness of place." People proposed involving local artists and children in the creation of the artwork and integrating the artwork into the amenities of the proposed streetscape design.

Gateway Treatment

Many participants suggested a gateway feature to give a distinct identity to Leland Avenue. It was suggested that the gateway feature "should be visible from the train." History and diversity of ethnicity were identified as way to express identity and potential themes for street fairs or festivals.

Businesses

Businesses are generally perceived as a resource and as a crucial element to the success of the design and management of a new, revitalized Leland Avenue.

Currently, vacancies and security bars are a source of frustration for many residents; workshop participants identified these as one of the causes behind the perceived lack of safety and attractiveness of the street. Some merchants however feel that loitering and other illegal activities are threatening their businesses and that iron gates are one of the answers to these problems.

Some new businesses have recently open and have become popular, and are praised for their outdoor displays and signage. One workshop participant pointed out that permit fees for displays and sidewalk seating should be streamlined to help merchants use the sidewalk space.

Generally, however, participants thought that stores on Leland do not have enough presence or visibility on the street. Participants suggested that "businesses use more of the sidewalks" with outdoor displays and signage, and should "stay open until late." There was a common interest in attracting new businesses such as a "bookstore" and new restaurants with "ambiance" and more cafes and "places you can sit and talk to friends." Other stores that were mentioned were those targeting daily needs such as a butcher, a hardware store, a nursery, a flower shop, a theatre, an ice cream parlor, a clothing store and a video rental shop. Participants mentioned that "no liquor stores or cannabis stores" should be allowed in the neighborhood. The existing library site was identified as a potential site for a grocery store once the library moves up the street. One group suggested placing a commercial space adjacent to Schiller Plaza in order to activate the space.

One group suggested associating a training program to new restaurants to create jobs for the local population. Another group suggested putting "art in vacant storefronts" as a temporary, transitional solution to the problem of neglect and perceived or real lack of safety.

A Business Improvement District (BID) was seen as a way to manage merchants programs. Merchants should also "attract new businesses with local economic development programs and street improvements." Participants mentioned that outdoor seating policies, outdoor displays and other amenities such as magazine racks could be organized by a BID.

—San Francisco Planning Department

Independent Claus: Adventures of a Mall Santa

From Page 3

The husband didn't hesitate. He pulled a business card from his wallet, and scribbled his wife's name and number on the back.

Larry knew this violated every code in the book. This was as crazy as the Thanksgiving Turkey opening a catering service.

Larry could get into major trouble. He might keep his beard, but he could lose his red suit forever.

But for some crazy reason — maybe the season — he began to spin a web to bring the couple together.

Chapter Nine

"What are you, stupid?" Margie scolded him that night at dinner. "You don't know these people. You don't know their history. You could get fired."

"Yeah," said Larry. "But — here's the plus side — I might get them back together, or at least reunite the little girls. It's worth a try."

"Good luck, stupid," Margie said.

Larry stewed for an hour before placing the call. Finally, he pulled out the crumpled card with the wife's — Jan's — phone number, and dialed it.

When she answered, Larry said, "Uh, Jan, this is, uh...well, this is Santa, the one from the mall."

"Oh my," she said. "I was there a couple of days ago with Erin, my daughter. Did I forget something?"

"No and yes," Larry said, seizing the opportunity. "No, you didn't leave anything here, but I did find something that I think belongs to you. Could you come identify it, say tomorrow about 5:30 at the Workshop display?"

"Sure," said Jan hesitantly. "I'll plan to be there."

Real quick, before he had a heart attack, Larry phoned the dad, John.

"John, this is Larry, uh, Santa," he said. "Here's the deal. Your wife will be at my display area tomorrow at 5:30. She thinks I found something she left there."

"I want you to bring me something

to convince her you two should get back together. Can you do it?"

"Absolutely," John said.

Chapter Ten

December 24th can sometimes be a slow day for mall Santas. That's because most kids have already come and gone. Sure, a few folks — mostly guys — wait until the last minute to grab a few gifts. But at Santa's Workshop, the fake snow has likely turned a hazy gray, the floor's sticky from multiple sugar spills, and the Helpers are mostly Helpless.

Larry slept little the night before, but faced the 24th with much more gusto than he normally mustered.

A little before noon John showed up at the Workshop. "What have you got for me?" Larry asked.

"How about this?" John countered, pulling an 8" x 10" photo frame from his coat. The picture inside was a torn photo of only John and Leslie. Half of it was missing.

"Ah, I get the picture...pun intended," said Larry. "But to tell you the truth, John, this may not be enough. Can you give me anything else?"

John thought for a moment, and pulled out a rumpled wallet. He dug through it, then handed Larry an old, creased photo of two high schoolers — obviously Jan and John — at a prom. On the back was the single word "Forever."

"Good enough," said Larry. "Jan's getting here at 5:30. Why don't you and Leslie come about 5:15?"

John and Leslie returned at the appointed time, and were told to hide in the Workshop.

Jan and Erin arrived a couple minutes past 5:30, curious about what they might find.

"Good to see you," Larry greeted them. "Yes, I've got something you need to identify," he said as he reached for a large sack near his chair.

He pulled out the framed half-photo and handed it to Erin. "Wow," she squealed, "it's Daddy and Leslie."

"The guy who gave this to me said

this picture's yours," Larry said.

Jan remained expressionless. "It used to be," she said, "but things change."

"Not according to this," Larry said as he handed the tiny photo to Jan.

About that time, John and Leslie stepped outside the Workshop. Erin screamed, Leslie screamed, even Larry screamed. Jan and John just stared at each other.

Sensing the uncomfortable silence, Larry spoke again. "You know, the best thing about Santa is, he knows what everybody wants for Christmas."

Well, Jan hugged John, they both hugged the girls, Larry hugged Margie, and two disoriented mall workers hugged each other.

You've never seen so many tears in your life. It looked like First Day of Allergy Season.

Sensing this family might actually

reunite, Larry treated everyone (except the disoriented mall workers) to an early Christmas Eve dinner.

Later, he invited Margie to his parents' front porch to share hot chocolate and enjoy the unseasonably warm weather and a cloudless, starry December sky.

And around 11, they were pretty sure they saw the real Santa and his reindeer land on top of the mall.

Larry smiled, confident that the big guy himself would be proud of a first-year Santa with a first-rate idea.

Epilogue

Five years later, Larry still works as a Santa. But he's now a self-employed worker — the independent Claus he aspired to be — who travels all over the country.

He puts on some sort of red suit every day. In January and February he makes personal appearances at

VISTACION VALLEY GRAPEVINE - JANUARY 2006 - 7

post-holiday sales. March through June finds him at trade shows promoting Christmas products.

July through September means department store appearances in red shorts and a tee shirt for "Christmas in Summer" sales. In October Larry serves as vice-principal of a Santa training school.

Then, come November, he's back on duty at his hometown mall.

One other thing: Larry and Margie got married. You can guess who the flower girls were.

Margie still works security at Santa's Workshop. And come next year, they'll welcome a new little workshop assistant.

Of course, he'll start out as a Helper Third Class. But when you're in the wish fulfillment business, there's plenty of advancement potential.

Kids' Plates Helping to Fund Injury and Abuse Prevention

The San Francisco Department of Public Health and the San Francisco Injury Center for Research and Prevention at UCSF, with funding from Kids' Plates, have teamed up to develop a statewide leadership network for health professionals in injury prevention.

Kids' Plates, a state license plate campaign, generates funds for child injury and abuse prevention and childcare health and safety programs. Kids' Plates can feature a heart, star, hand or plus sign to make a personalized plate such as I? MY DOG or GR+MA.

Proceeds from Kids' Plates sales are distributed to child injury prevention (25 percent), child abuse prevention (25 percent), and child care health and safety (50 percent) programs.

California Kids' Plates can be purchased for cars, trucks, and trailers, and cost \$50 to begin and \$40 per yearly renewal. To purchase Kids' Plates, vehicle owners should call 1-800-HEY-KIDS or go to <http://kidsplates.org>.

The injury prevention leadership network will help younger and mid-career health professionals develop skills and resources so they will be prepared to take more leadership as many health workers retire in the next decade.

Injury prevention health professionals specialize in helping the public prevent injuries by working to make our streets and homes safer. Efforts in San Francisco include local traffic safety projects, child safety programs and workshops, and

New Classes on Medical Discovery at UCSF

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at UCSF begins the winter quarter with new courses for the public starting in February 2006.

Six-week courses on "Medical Heroes: Great Discoveries, Great Care" and "Understanding the Human Genome and the Future of Medicine" will be taught by UCSF's world renowned faculty.

Classes meet from 7 p.m. to 8:45 p.m., beginning the week of Feb. 21. Tuition for each course is \$75.

home inspections for older people.

"We hope to see more support for injury prevention efforts," said Michael Radetsky, DPH's Injury Prevention Planning Coordinator. "These plates are a way for people to support injury prevention for children, while making their own creative statement."

For more information on Kids' Plates or local injury prevention efforts, contact: Isabel Auerbach, San Francisco Department of Public Health at (415) 575-5684.

A special course on "Health Care Issues for Older Adults" will meet on Saturdays, Mar. 11, 18, and 25, from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. The tuition is \$50.

All classes will take place in the UCSF Medical Sciences Building at 513 Parnassus Ave. on the UCSF campus.

Online registration is available at <http://lifelonglearning.ucsf.edu>.

For more information, call UCSF Public Affairs at (415) 476-2557.



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Action means more than words. See you at our monthly community meeting on the Second Saturday of each month at 66 Raymond Avenue.

Mention this ad and with a completed transaction, I will make a donation to Visitacion Valley Community Center or any charitable organization of your choice.

Grapevine Puzzler Still More '50s TV Shows

C T F G R W R S S F T E R Y G H J H K A
G E H S D F T O O F R A G U S H O W L H
D Y E O B C N G J B G Y U 9 U A E F I G
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Alfred
Hitchcock
Presents
Cheyenne
Danny
Thomas
Show
December
Bride

Ed Sullivan
Show
Father
Knows Best
Gale Storm
Show
General
Electric
Theatre

Gunsmoke
Have Gun
Will Travel
Lassie
Lineup
Perry Como
Show
\$64,000
Question

Sugarfoot
Tales of
Wells Fargo
The Rifleman
The Texan
Wagon
Train
Zane Grey
Theatre

Historic Proportions

1898

Match clues to answers.

- Dawson chosen as capital of this new Canadian province on June 13.
- On Apr. 25, the United States declared war on this country.
- Territory annexed by U.S. on July 7.
- Independence from Spain declared on June 12.
- On Feb. 15, this ship exploded and sank in Havana Harbor.
- The Treaty of Peace ending the Spanish-American War was signed here on Dec. 10.
- First American-built auto called a Winton was sold here on Mar. 24.

As a Matter of Fact

*A Tropical storm must reach wind speeds of 74 miles per hour before it can be considered a hurricane.

*In 1864, James Doughty, acting chief engineer of the U.S. Navy, created the periscope.

*The geoduck is a huge, edible clam found along the Pacific Coast. Its shell is about six inches long but the clam itself can weigh up to six pounds.

*Ohio's official beverage is tomato juice.

*Like a chameleon, the grouper fish can change its color to blend with its surroundings.

*The average flea is only 1/8 inch long but can jump up to 13 inches.

*The custom of hanging up mistletoe at Christmas dates back to the Druids, an ancient people of Britain.

*During dry seasons, the eland, the largest antelope in Africa, can live for weeks without water.

*The largest fish is the whale shark, which weighs more than twice as much as an African elephant.

Five Years Ago In the Grapevine

JANUARY 2001

*District 10 residents in San Francisco on Dec. 12 elected Sophie Maxwell to represent them on the Board of Supervisors with 55.3 percent of the vote.

*North East Medical Services (NEMS) on Leland Avenue offered free flu shots in December while their supply of vaccine lasted.

Sump, the Grump



Poor Rix's Almanac

by Rix Quinn

Dear Poor Rix: I just moved into my first apartment, and I'm about to buy a Christmas tree. Do you have any tips for me? - Twenty-Something

Christmas trees are like a distant cousin. They come to your house, surround themselves with presents, and stay a month. Then they begin to shed, and need somebody to drive them off.

People often do strange things with cut trees. One of my neighbors pulled out a chain saw and widened his front door three feet. That allowed him to bring in the tree without bending it, and made a great spectacle the neighbors could videotape.

Once inside the home, cut a couple inches off the base of the trunk, and immerse it in a tree stand filled with water. If your tree is artificial, it doesn't need water. And if you cut anything off its trunk, you'll have a shorter tree next year.

Do not use flammable decorations on a tree. The new smaller, safer tree lights seem to work well. I even saw one guy try to wear these lights to a party, but his extension cord kept coming out.

Some people surround the tree with a decorative tree skirt. I have never worn a tree skirt to a party, because I do not shave my legs.

After the holidays, dispose of your tree properly. Many cities will remove it from your lawn, and recycle it into mulch.

Therefore, do not dispose of your artificial tree. Plastic mulch will not grow anything.

Dear Poor Rix: I love holiday shopping! How about you? - December Debbie

Absolutely! On a good day, Poor Rix can pass out more dough than a baker at a cookie workshop.

But my friend Verne, who is tighter than last year's thong, can squeeze a dollar so hard it makes Washington's hair fall out. Here's his twisted philosophy:

1. Treat your wallet like a fine wine. Never take it out for a frivolous purpose.

2. Diet experts say you should never shop for groceries when you're hungry. Likewise, never shop for clothes when you're naked.

3. Set three levels of spending. Give family and close friends presents. Send other friends a nice card. Send casual friends a used card.

4. Speaking of used cards: (a) Never send the same used card to the person you got it from the year before. (b) Never re-send cards with your name and another family's picture.

5. Consider giving coupons. Last

Grapevine Want Ads

IT'S NOT SMART to do nothing when you have something negative in your life. The issue somehow affects and becomes everybody's problem.

*Getting nervous and upset

*Feeling sick o a regular basis.

*Feeling like punching out something or someone.

*Feeling like screaming.

*Can't sleep.

*Watching television all night.

*Simply not in a happy frame of mind.

*Problem making the right choices

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, we need to talk with you. Vistacion Valley Jobs, Education and Training center offers advocacy and mediation services relating to all types of quality-of-life issues. Court-mandated programs available. Service and trust is our commitment to the community. Contact Marjone Ann Williams, Counselor at (415) 239-2877.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED for WVCC After School Program to tutor children ages 5-14 at one of our 11 sites in the Vistacion Valley area. Interested persons contact Dee Smith, WVCC After School coordinator (415) 585-2059.

GRAPEVINE DISPLAY ADVERTISING: new limited-time rates: Full Page: \$60; 1/2 Page \$33.75; 1/4 Page \$18.75; 1/8 Page \$10; 1/12 Page \$8; 1/16 Page \$6. Generous discount for three or more insertions. Call (415) 467-9300 for more details. **Want Ads:** 20 words for \$1. Extra line 50 cents. Ad and payment should be received by 15th of prior month at Vistacion Valley Grapevine, 50 Raymond Ave., San Francisco, CA 94134.

year, ole Verne surprised me with a health-related item.

And if I ever need all-natural prostate relief, I can get it for 25 percent off.

Dear Poor Rix: Big problem! It's almost December 25, and I haven't sent my holiday cards! What do you think about this? - Linda

Two questions, Linda: (1) Will you send Poor Rix a card? (2) Does it contain a gift certificate? Poor Rix believes a late card is a great card. Here are three good reasons - and two average ones - to delay mailing:

1. Excited Recipients - Before the 25th, your loved ones got greetings from friends, plus people who could sell them something. The week after, they'll welcome any card that doesn't require monthly payments.

2. Longer Shelf Life - It's likely those early cards got tossed out with wrapping paper. Not your later arrival, which might sit around until late January. (Money-saving hint: Add heart stickers to the envelope, call it a "Yuletide Valentine.")

3. Enclose a Letter - Between Christmas and New Year, recipients have nothing better to do, and will love to read letters about folks they met once at either a childbirth class or a school play.

4. Enclose Money - Last year my old football coach got a card containing 25 cents, along with the message "I heard you needed a quarter back."

5. Personal Delivery - For a fun night out - and perhaps a free meal - hand-deliver those cards to each door. When I tried this, some of my friends pretended they weren't home.

But that's OK...I hung around until breakfast.

Dear Poor Rix: When did people begin to host parties for the New Year? - January Jan

Ancient Egyptians celebrated New Year when the Nile River overflowed, usually in June. Then someone suggested, "If we change New Year to January, we won't drown coming home from the party."

Early Romans named their celebration for Janus, a deity with two faces. One face looked backward, the other forward.

Today, we also reflect on the past and plan for the future. But we no longer have two faces, because the one in back is too hard to shave.

Another New Year's custom was chimney cleaning. This meant participants planned to "clean up" their faults, and strive to do better the next year.

Sadly, a few zealous cleaners toppled down the chute into the fireplace below. This was called "coming down with the flue."

The Druids celebrated the New Year on March 1. Unfortunately, that was two months late for bowl games.

But remember, these were ancient civilizations, and did not yet worship football.

Dear Poor Rix: I hear there's some

research that claims people today have shorter attention spans. Could this be true? - Concerned

Well, it appears that because multiple messages bombard us daily, we mentally "delete" those we don't currently need. (This explains why we forget what we had for breakfast, or why Poor Rix simply calls his friends "Pal.")

Latest reports - compiled by scientists who pay attention - set the average adult attention span at only eight minutes. It's reportedly even shorter if you're a dog, and shorter still if you're a roaming animal, like a wild bachelor.

The key to getting attention, research says, is to appeal to as many senses as possible. If we can see something, hear it, and have a chance to "talk back" to it (such as responding to a message by typing a response), we're more likely to retain it.

Following this logic, the best way make a person remember you is to meet her, ask questions, listen to her answers, shake her hand, then buy her dinner.

A few years ago, we called this a "date." Today, however, we applaud it as a great scientific discovery.

So what have we learned? (1) To get somebody's attention, ask him or her out for dinner. (2) To keep that person's attention, limit the date to eight minutes.

Dear Poor Rix: With all the tools modern science possesses, why can't it solve the problem of aging? - Getting Older

If Poor Rix had the answer, he would still look 19 instead of...uh...well, never mind how old Poor Rix looks.

First, aging is a natural event, like floods, homework, and cold sores. A person without wrinkles is either a person without experience, or one without moisturizer.

Children, like adults, lose their teeth. But unlike adults, they can grow new ones.

Nearly everybody wants to look older until age 30, at which time they want to look younger. Hardly anybody wants to look the same age all the time (except Dorian Gray, and he's not real).

One of Poor Rix's friends is deathly afraid to wrinkle. She's had so much facial enhancement, when she smiles she looks like my gerbil. (But I find that attractive.)

After her last surgery we met for lunch to celebrate. Suddenly, without warning, a piece of her nose dropped right into the potato salad. She screamed, covered her face with a napkin, and raced for the restroom.

I ran after her, asking, "Do you need to go to the hospital?"

"No, no," she said. "I'll be OK."

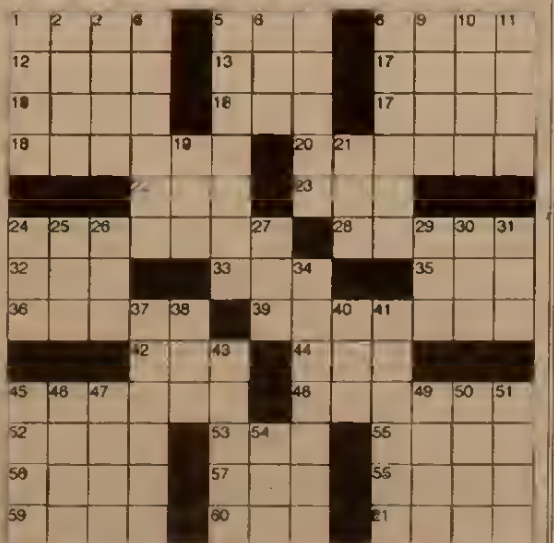
"But I sure hate to lose face in front of my friends."

Poor Rix offers bad answers to good questions. E-mail him at rixquinn@charter.net

Crossword Puzzle

Solution on Page 11

ACROSS
1 Woman's work basket
12 Laughter sounds
18 Polish border river
12 Arrow poison
13 Edible root
14 killer (abbr.)
15 Slushy ice
16 School course (abbr.)
17 Ancient Gr. city
16 Hoge guts
20 Mate of Adam
22 Mulberry of India
23 Carriage
24 Franchise
28 Book of maps
32 Antiaircraft artillery (abbr.)
33 Royal Air Force (abbr.)
35 Altar constellation
36 Avifauna
39 Import
42 Right (Lat.)
44 Camel hair cloth
45 Fearful
48 Fitted garment
52 Applaud
53 Amer. Expeditionary forces (abbr.)
55 Cranial nerves
56 Cloak
57 Hawaiian fish
58 Above (Ger.)
59 Ivory (Lat.)
60 To or from a distance (pref.)
61 Withered



DOWN
1 Son of Ham
2 Samoan port
3 Singing voice
4 Square-cut stone
5 Stableman
8 Atl. Coast
9 Conference (abbr.)
7 Canvas
8 Spotted cat
9 Port Timor's capital
10 Blu-pencil
11 Hebrew letter
19 Sup
21 Mountain on Crest
24 Vehicle compartment
25 Yellow Sea arm
26 Rhine tributary
27 Pack down
29 Indo Chin. language
30 Scot. elder tree
31 Wilt
34 Oira
37 Didy
38 Syb (pref.)
40 Presidential nickname
41 Mole
43 State (Ger.)
45 Land measure
46 Amorphous mass
47 Ryukyu Islands viper
49 Gooseberry
50 Elbe tributary
51 Laugh (Fr.)
54 Barely got by

Visitation Valley Police Report

by Ingleside Captain Paul Chignell
Police Cases

*On Nov. 18 at 1:12 p.m., officers heard a flurry of gunshots in the area of Sunnydale and Hahn. They also saw three suspects run quickly from the scene across the 1600 block of Sunnydale. They determined that the shots were fired at a nearby building and located the intended victim who was not hit. The victim identified the shooter. Later in the day at 4 p.m., the officers located the suspect in the area and booked him for attempted murder and for shooting at an inhabited building. The suspect resides in Union City. At 5 p.m., officers stopped a vehicle on the 1900 block of Sunnydale as they detected a strong smell of marijuana from a vehicle with three occupants. They stopped the vehicle and found a large amount of cocaine and marijuana. The driver, who lives on the first block of Brookdale was unlicensed. He was arrested on numerous narcotics charges and his 2000 Ford was towed.

*On Nov. 21 at 11 a.m., officers Joe went to the 300 block of Arleta on a report of a guest vandalizing a house. The officers encountered the protagonist and arrested her for a narcotics warrant. At 5:30 p.m., officers went to the 1800 block of Sunnydale on a domestic violence case where a boyfriend had beaten a woman and ripped her clothes. The suspect, who lives on the 5100 block of 3rd Street, was booked for assault.

*On Nov. 24 at 6:30 p.m., officers were driving on the first block of Castillo when they observed a vehicle being driven with no license plates. They stopped the vehicle and noticed that the driver was operating the vehicle with a steak knife in the ignition. The vehicle had been reported stolen from Oakland. The resident of Quesada was arrested for stolen auto and driving unlicensed.

*On Nov. 26 at 12:48 p.m., Gang Task Force officers observed fifteen males loitering on the first block of Heritage. One person quickly walked away when the officers approached. The suspect was stopped and dropped two packages of narcotics. The resident of Quesada was booked on a narcotics charge. At 7 p.m., an officer was at the scene of an accident at Visitation and Rutland. He found that a resident of Rutland was unlicensed. The person was cited and his 1991 Nissan was towed. At 9 p.m., an officer stopped a vehicle at Leland and Rutland for a headlight violation. The driver, who lives on Rutland, was driving with a suspended license and no insurance. He was cited and his 1988 Nissan was towed. At 9:02 p.m., officers stopped a vehicle for going through a stop sign at Raymond and Delta. The driver, who was wearing a bullet proof vest, gave conflicting names and could not produce valid identification. After an investigation, the resident of Hollister Street was booked on numerous traffic related charges and a warrant for hit-and-run, reckless driving and resisting arrest.

*On Nov. 27 at 11:01 a.m., Gang Task Force officers were on patrol on the 1600 block of Sunnydale when they observed a group of young men loitering. When the men saw the officers, one of the men threw a gun under a vehicle. The loaded .22 caliber revolver was retrieved and a 15 year-old from Antioch was arrested.

*On Nov. 29 at 4:30 p.m., an officer was patrolling Hans Schiller Park at Leland and Peabody in response to community complaints of drug possession, dealing and drinking alcohol in public. The officer stopped a resident of South

San Francisco and arrested him for drinking in public, possession of suspected cocaine and other violations.

*On Nov. 30 at 9:30 a.m., an officer booked a 14 year-old for shelter at Child Protective Services. The contact was made on the 400 block of Raymond.

*On Dec. 2 at 3:12 p.m., a police sergeant heard a broadcast of a possible armed and wanted suspect in the Sunnydale and Santos area. Along with officers, the suspect was spotted and arrested. The resident of the 1900 block of Sunnydale was booked for a no bail narcotics warrant from the Santa Ana Police Department. At 11:14 p.m., officers went to the 1900 block of Sunnydale on a domestic dispute. They arrested a resident of the 100 block of Brazil for a stayaway order violation.

*On Dec. 6 at 12 noon, a school resource officer at 450 Raymond cited a juvenile for assaulting a school employee. The child lives on Double Rock. At 8:23 p.m., officers stopped a vehicle for speeding on the 200 block of Hahn. The driver, from Antioch, was wanted on a no bail drunk driving warrant.

*On Dec. 7 at 1:15 p.m., an officer cited a child at Visitation Valley Middle School, 450 Raymond, for assaulting a school employee. The child lives on Leland. At 7:22 p.m., officers went to the first block of Blythdale and arrested a resident there for robbery and battery as a result of an interaction the suspect had previously with a girlfriend. At 8:36 p.m., officers were on plainclothes patrol in the Leland and Rutland area in response to neighborhood complaints of drug dealing. The officers stopped a loiterer who was a known drug dealer. After an investigation they found suspected crack cocaine and drug paraphernalia. The suspect has no local address.

*On Dec. 8 at 12:56 p.m., officers were alerted to a suspect dumping automobile parts on the street. A warrant check revealed that a resident of the 200 block of Leland was wanted on a warrant charging reckless driving. At 3:37 p.m., officers were conducting traffic enforcement on Bayshore at Leland when they spotted an inebriate with a pit bull off the leash. They stopped the suspect who became verbally aggressive towards the officers. The resident of the 300 block of Wilde was found to have a drunk driving warrant from San Mateo County.

*On Dec. 9 at 3:18 p.m., officers were alerted by an inspector of the Juvenile Bureau that a suspect from an aggravated assault on Nov. 30 may be in the 1600 block of Sunnydale. The officers located the suspect, who lives on the 200 block of Teddy and arrested him for felony assault. At 5:05 p.m., an officer stopped a vehicle at Sunnydale and Rutland for a red light violation. The driver, a resident of Newcombe, was unlicensed. He was cited and his vehicle was towed. At 8:55 p.m., a victim and a suspect who know each other were arguing violently inside a market at Sunnydale and Hahn. The female victim threatened to "mace" the suspect. The suspect uttered obscenities and then struck the victim and took her mace. A police sergeant was on patrol in the area when the victim flagged him down and pointed out the suspect. The suspect was arrested for robbery and a warrant charging assault. The suspect has no stable address.

*On Dec. 10 at 7 a.m., officers went to the 2100 block of Bayshore on a report of a husband locked inside a bedroom refusing to come out. The estranged husband had a restraining order against him from being in the residence. He was arrested. At 2:23 p.m., officers went to the first block of Tioga where a 3 year-old girl was wandering in the middle of the street. Some time later the mother

arrived and stated that she had left the girl asleep and went to visit a friend. The mother was booked on a child neglect charge. At 4 p.m., officers saw a vehicle go through a posted stop sign at Visitation and Rutland without stopping. The driver, who lives on the 700 block of Delta, was driving with a suspended license and had warrants for narcotics and driving with a suspended license. At 7:03 p.m., officers went to the 200 block of Teddy where a husband had slapped his wife repeatedly and thrown her against a wall. The suspect was arrested on a domestic violence charge and criminal threats.

*On Dec. 11 at 8:02 a.m., officers went to the 200 block of Rey where an estranged husband had been trying to break down a door and had cut himself smashing the windows to the house. The suspect was arrested and charged with multiple counts. At 7:48 p.m. an officer and police sergeant contacted a resident of the first block of Brookdale who had a warrant from Daly City for drunk driving and driving with a suspended license.

*On Dec. 13 at 7 a.m., officers went to the 100 block of Blythdale where an unwanted guest refused to leave the premises and was in violation of a stayaway order. The suspect, with no local address, was arrested. At 11:40 a.m., officers went to the 500 block of Visitation where a husband had beaten his wife in front of the children. This was the 20th time such an incident occurred according to the wife. The officers arrested the suspect for domestic violence and for a misdemeanor warrant from Daly City. At 2:02 p.m., officers went to John Shelley Drive near Cambridge regarding ongoing complaints of loitering and drug use. They spotted a car with the door open and a subject apparently urinating. They stopped and found the suspect to be on felony probation, parole and in possession of suspected cocaine and marijuana. The resident of the 1400 block of Shafter was booked on narcotics charges and a parole hold.

*On Dec. 15 at 11:20 a.m., officers went to a check cashing establishment on a fraud in progress where a suspect was attempting to cash a stolen check. The officers captured a resident of Blythdale before he could escape. The suspect was booked on forgery and receiving stolen property charges. At 12:45 p.m., officers went to the first block of Blythdale at the request of the Housing Authority on a trespasser in a vacant unit. The officers cited a resident of the 1700 block of Florida for trespassing.

*On Dec. 16 at 10:20 a.m., a school resource officer for Visitation Valley Middle School cited a young man who lives on Double Rock for vandalism at the school. At 7 p.m., officers observed a vehicle speeding at Bayshore and Visitation. When they stopped the driver, they found that he was on parole. A parole search revealed narcotics and paraphernalia. The transient was arrested on narcotics and parole violations.

Police Summaries

*Nov 15-19, 1800 block of Sunnydale Ave., burglary, televisions taken.
*Nov 18 6:52 p.m., 1600 block of Sunnydale Ave., homicide, gun used
*Nov 20 4:23 p.m., 100 block of Blythdale Ave., known suspect shoots at victim, no injury
*Nov 20 7:5 Ankeny St., found 1985 Toyota
*Nov 20 37 Blythdale Ave., found 1992 Chevrolet
*Nov 20 380 Sawyer St., found 1970 Chevrolet
*Nov 20 683 Campbell Ave., found 1988 Toyota
*Nov 20 400 block of Leland Ave., malicious mischief
*Nov 20: 575 Raymond Ave., found 1984 Buick
*Nov 20: 500 block of Sawyer St., theft from vehicle
*Nov 20 1400 block of Silliman St., theft from vehicle
*Nov 20 Sunnydale Ave. and Hahn St., battery
*Nov 20 1000 block of Sunnydale Ave., battery
*Nov 20 1300 block of Sunnydale Ave., missing juvenile
*Nov 21 2 p.m., 100 block of Rey St., robbery,

three suspects beat victim and try to yank necklace off without success

*Nov 21: 100 block of Garrison Ave., threats
*Nov 21. 200 block of Leland Ave., sexual battery
*Nov 21 575 Raymond Ave., found 1984 Buick
*Nov 21 1800 block of Silliman St., malicious mischief
*Nov 21: 1071 Sunnydale Ave., found 2004 Nissan.
*Nov 21. 1300 block of Sunnydale Ave., missing juvenile, 14 years old
*Nov 21. 1724 Sunnydale Ave., found 1984 GMC
*Nov 21: Sunnydale Ave. and Hahn St., threats
*Nov 22 11:06 a.m., First block of Cambridge St., burglary, computers, jewelry, front door
*Nov 22 1:10 p.m., 100 block of Wilde Ave., burglary, front gate, camera, television.
*Nov 22 2:30 p.m., Oxford and Felton Sts., robbery, car pulls up to a 17-year-old and suspect attacks victim, throwing him to the ground, suspect demands money but victim refuses and suspect flees in car, vehicle is Ford Explorer, color unknown
*Nov 22 1200 block of Brussels St., theft of floor mat
*Nov 22 300 block of Ordway St., vehicle strip.
*Nov 25-29 2 p.m., 100 block of Blythdale Ave., burglary, back door, appliances.
*Nov 26 2 Ankeny St., found 1989 Toyota
*Nov 26 1000 block of Bowdoin St., theft from vehicle
*Nov 26 100 block of Brookdale Ave., battery
*Nov 26 Burr St. and Argonaut Ave., found 1983 Toyota
*Nov 26 29 Castillo St., found 1989 Toyota
*Nov 26 Delano St. and Oneida Ave., theft from vehicle
*Nov 26 97 Delta St., found 1991 Honda
*Nov 26: Ordway and Somerset St., stolen 1991 Honda
*Nov 26: First block of Princeton St., threatening phone calls.
*Nov 26 1268 Sunnydale Ave., stolen 1998 Ford
*Nov 26 1900 block of Sunnydale Ave., found persons, 3 and 12 years-old
*Nov 26 346 Woolsey St., stolen 1990 Toyota
*Nov 28 4 p.m., Arleta Ave. and Bayshore Blvd., BB gun shot at juvenile on bus
*Nov 28 5:11 p.m., Rey St. and Visitation Ave., robbery, seven suspects attack elderly man as he gets off bus and throw him to the ground, beat him and take his cell phone.
*Nov 29 6:48 pm Schwerin St. and Visitation Ave., robbery, six suspects attack exchange student from Japan as he gets off bus and take his cell phone
*Nov 29: 100 block of Britton St., malicious mischief
*Nov 29: 50 Leland Ave., found 1994 Acura
*Nov 29: First block of Rey St., malicious mischief
*Nov 29 First block of Santos St., threats
*Nov 29 709 Velasco Ave., found 1989 Chevrolet
*Nov 30 6:23 p.m. (occurred Nov 18), 1900 block of Geneva Ave., stalking incident
*Nov 30 8:30 a.m.-3:40 p.m., First block of Brookdale Ave., burglary, front door, money
*Nov 30 5:40 p.m., 1600 block of Sunnydale Ave., felony assault, dispute between dice players, victim struck head on statue.
*Nov 30 1315 Goettingen St., found 1993 Dodge
*Nov 30 100 block of Rey St., breaking windows
*Nov 30 Sunnydale and Sawyer St., assault
*Nov 30 300 block of Wilde Ave., vehicle strip
*Nov 30 11:30 a.m. (reported Dec 3), 100 block of Blythdale Ave., burglary, appliances
*Dec 1 2 a.m. (reported Dec 2), 100 block of Blythdale Ave., victim drunk, struck on head
*Dec 2 12 noon, 400 block of Raymond Ave., assault on school employee.
*Dec 2 3:30 p.m., 1900 block of Sunnydale Ave., burglary, computer and DVD
*Dec 3 12:31 a.m., 200 block of Santos St., felony assault, victim shot in hip
*Dec 3 7:50 p.m. First block of Blythdale Ave., suspicious phone calls
*Dec 4 11:38 p.m., 600 block of Campbell Ave., victim drunk and stabbed in torso, totally uncooperative
*Dec 4 583 Campbell Ave., stolen 2004 Toyota
*Dec 4 1900 block of Geneva Ave., mental detention
*Dec 4 616 Rutland Ave., found 1986 Toyota
*Dec 4: Somerset and Bacon Sts., stolen 1999 Toyota

VISITACION VALLEY GRAPEVINE - JANUARY 2005 - 9

*Dec 4 1751 Sunnydale Ave., found 1997 Honda
*Dec 4 1800 block of Sunnydale Ave., stayaway order violation
*Dec 4 100 block of Tioga Ave., peeping Tom
*Dec 4 1751 Sunnydale Ave., found 1997 Honda
*Dec 5 7:38 a.m., McLaren Park, arson of a vehicle
*Dec 5 100 block of Rey St., malicious mischief
*Dec 5 1600 Sunnydale Ave., detention of suspect who ran from officers and may have dropped cocaine while running
*Dec 5 600 block of Velasco Ave., disturbing the peace
*Dec 6 7 40 a.m., 1900 block of Sunnydale Ave., burglary, window
*Dec 6 Bayshore Blvd. and Raymond Ave., found 1987 Toyota
*Dec 6 200 block of Blythdale Ave., found 1987 Toyota
*Dec 6 200 block of Blythdale Ave., detention
*Dec 6 McLaren Park, theft from vehicle
*Dec 6 400 block of Sawyer St., malicious mischief
*Dec 6 1600 block of Sunnydale Ave., battery
*Dec 7: First block of Delta St., battery
*Dec 7 1800 block of Felton St., fraud, checks, suspect known
*Dec 7 100 block of Leland Ave., threats case
*Dec 7 300 block of Leland Ave., threats case
*Dec 8 7:45 a.m., 200 block of Arleta Ave., burglary, gate, sports equipment
*Dec 8 80 Alder St., stolen 1985 Toyota
*Dec 8 Guttentberg and Woolsey Sts., stolen 1990 Toyota
*Dec 9 2100 Bayshore Blvd., stolen 1986 Toyota
*Dec 9 31 Blythdale Blvd., found 1990 Plymouth
*Dec 9 31 Blythdale Ave., found 1989 GMC
*Dec 11 10:10 p.m., 2100 block of Bayshore Blvd., burglary, front door, loss pending
*Dec 11 400 block of Argonaut Ave., malicious mischief
*Dec 11 100 block of Brookdale Ave., breaking windows
*Dec 11 1800 block of Sunnydale Ave., missing 11-year-old (found)
*Dec 11 1857 Sunnydale Ave., stolen 1989 Dodge
*Dec 11 1800 block of Sunnydale Ave., malicious mischief
*Dec 11 1922 Sunnydale Ave., found 1989 Toyota
*Dec 11 First block of Tioga Ave., marijuana cultivation
*Dec 12 5 p.m., Bayshore Blvd. and Arleta Ave., robbery, strongarm, money
*Dec 12 10:53 pm 200 block of Blythdale Ave., burglary, window, household goods
*Dec 12 1000 block of Goettingen St., battery
*Dec 12 100 block of Hahn St., found adult, 69 years-old
*Dec 12 1867 Sunnydale Ave., found 1989 Dodge
*Dec 12 136 Tucker Ave., found 1986 Toyota
*Dec 13 9:30 a.m., First block of Cambridge St., burglary, front door, laptop, money
*Dec 13 First block of Garrison Ave., vandalism to vehicle
*Dec 13 First block of Leland Ave., missing child, 14 years-old
*Dec 14 First block of Heritage Ave., threats
*Dec 14 411 Raymond Ave., found 1999 GMC
*Dec 15 6 e.m.-4 p.m., 900 block of Brussels St., burglary, gate, unknown loss
*Dec 15 2:35 pm Santos and Brookdale Ave., robbery, attempted pursesnatch on bus
*Dec 15 4:24 pm First block of Brookdale Ave., investigation regarding stolen guns on Housing property
*Dec 15 First block of Brookdale Ave., battery
*Dec 15 First block of Leland Ave., found person, 14 year-old girl
*Dec 15 300 block of Leland Ave., battery
*Dec 15 Sunnydale and Bayshore Blvd., found 2001 Honda
*Dec 15 1600 block of Sunnydale Ave., battery
*Dec 16 9:08 p.m., 400 block of Mansell St., shots fired at school, handgun recovered, numerous suspects detained and released, investigation continues
*Dec 16 10:30 p.m., Rey St. and Visitation Ave., shots fired at vehicle

Earthquake? Fire? Flood? What's Next? Are You Ready?

Assemblyman Leland Y. Yee invites you to attend the

2005 Emergency Preparedness Fair



American Red Cross Bay Area
Governor's Office of Emergency Services
California National Guard
California Highway Patrol

And many county/city emergency response organizations

When: Saturday, January 21, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Where: Visitation Valley Middle School

450 Raymond Ave, San Francisco

Enter parking lot from Visitation Avenue in McLaren Park

10 a.m. – 1 p.m.: Visit booths for info and giveaways

11 a.m.: Emergency Services Panel

12 noon: Personal Preparedness Workshop

- Meet fire, public safety and emergency response professionals
- Explore emergency command vehicles and equipment
- Enter to win one of several valuable prizes
- Learn how to safeguard your home, family, pets, and property
- Leave with a personalized action plan

Take time now so your family will be safe tomorrow.

For more information call: (415) 357-2312

In partnership with Visitation Valley Middle School and the Visitation Valley Beacon Center

Bayview Police Station Update

A SAFE Holiday Season

by Bayview Captain Albert Pardini
These are some holiday safety tips brought to you by S.F. SAFE:

Personal Safety

*Be Alert! Look confident, walk with a purpose.

*Lock car doors, whether driving or parked.

*Keep keys in your hand when walking to your car or home.

*When shopping with children, teach them to go to a store clerk or security guard if you get separated.

*If someone demands your purse or wallet, surrender it immediately. It's not worth your life.

Prevent Car Break-Ins

*Leave nothing visible in the car. Keep vehicle locked.

*Keep packages locked in your trunk when shopping. Move your car to a different location each time you do this.

*Never leave your vehicle with the engine running.

Pickpocketing and ID Theft

*Bring only the cash you will need.

*Keep cash separate from IDs and credit cards.

*Do not carry your social security card or passport.

*Record credit card numbers so you can immediately report any loss to the issuing company.

-Strong, confident body language and eye contact with others is likely to discourage pickpocketing.

*If taking public transit, keep your fast pass separate from your purse and wallet.

*Shred receipts that show your credit card number.

Home Burglary Prevention

*Put timers on different lights throughout the interior and exterior of the house.

*Have newspapers, mail and deliveries held or picked up by someone you trust.

*Take a home inventory of your valuables and record serial numbers; engrave property with your CA driver's license number. Photograph your items.

Charity and Fundraising Fraud

*Request written information about the organization.

*Don't be fooled by a name that closely resembles the name of a respected or well known charity.

Police Cases

*Tuesday, Nov. 22, 12:30 p.m., *Homicide by Firearm*: Officers responded to the 1200 block of Silver on a report of a shooting. When they arrived, they found two victims shot in a mini-van. According to witnesses at the scene, the victims were driving west on Silver when a silver colored van passed them on the left. The occupants of the passing van were three African American men. As the suspects' van passed the victims' van, the suspects shot at the victims several times hitting both of them. Witnesses stated that the suspects had automatic rifles. The suspect vehicle's sliding side door came off at the scene and was laying in the middle of the street. One of the victims was pronounced dead at the scene. The other was transported to the SFGH emergency room where he was in critical condition. Neither victim is a resident of the Bayview District. The van without the side door was soon found parked in McLaren Park. A perimeter was set up around the north end of the park and it was searched by K-9, Specialists Units and even the Coast Guard helicopter, but the suspects were not found.

*Friday, Nov. 25, 3:05 p.m., *Robbery with Force*, Cambridge and Felton Streets: An elderly woman (90 years old) was walking with her daughter when they were approached by two suspects. The suspects pushed the elderly woman to the ground and subsequently took the daughter's handbag and fled on foot. The elderly woman was brought to the hospital and treated for a broken pelvis from the

suspect's cowardly actions. The handbag was recovered a short time later. Crime Scene responded and attempted to get usable fingerprints from the bag with negative results. Suspects' descriptions were vague. The first suspect is described as a white male 18-20 years old 5'07" unknown weight, wearing baggy jeans. The second suspect is described as a black male unknown age about 5'07" unknown weight, wearing red and black clothes. If you have any information regarding this incident please call Robbery at 553-1201.

*Tuesday, Nov. 29, 10:30 p.m., 500 block of Bayshore and 2800 block of San Bruno, *Robbery with Firearms*: Officers were hailed by a citizen and told that there was a disturbance in the AMS Market. The officers advised Headquarters and responded to the market. The employees of the market told the officers that they had just been robbed at gunpoint by three black males, at least two of whom had handguns. This incident was recorded by a security camera and pictures of the suspects are now posted at Bayview Station. Ten minutes later, officers responded to the Tiara Santa Market on San Bruno for a hold up alarm. The owner told them that he too had just been robbed by three black men with firearms. Security recordings revealed that it was the same three-some from the AMS Market.

*Friday, Dec. 2, 9:56 a.m., *Attempted Robbery*, 1900 Block of Silver: An elderly woman was walking down Silver Avenue when she was approached by an unknown male. The male grabbed her purse strap and pushed the woman down to the ground. The male was unable to get the purse and fled into Thurgood Marshall High School. Numerous units searched the area to no avail for the suspect. The suspect is described as a black male unknown age and physical description. However, he had a beige hooded jacket with a design on the back and a dark duffel bag.

*Monday, Dec. 5, 6:30 and 9:45 a.m., *Noise Complaint*, Tocaloma and Lathrop: Bayview officers responded numerous times to a house on the corner of Tocaloma and Lathrop Ave. On one of the responses, a Bayview officer heard a loudspeaker blaring in the man's back yard. After a moment of confusion, the officer realized the man was blaring the SFPD radio channels from the Southern, Richmond, and Northern Police districts. The officer notified dispatch of the oddity. Within 30 seconds of the officer's transmission, the man's loudspeaker went silent. On another occasion, an officer who knocked on the man's front door stepped over dozens of empty bullet casing that littered the walkway.

*Tuesday, Dec. 6, 4 p.m., Silver and Goettingen, *Strong Arm Robbery*: The victim was walking west on Silver at Goettingen when the suspects, two black males in their late teens, walked up behind the victim and pulled him on his back, causing his head to hit the sidewalk. The suspects then took the victim's cell phone from his pants pocket and ran east on Silver. Officers arrived on scene and searched the area, but were unable to find the suspects.

*Saturday, Dec. 10, 1:07 a.m., *Disturbing the Peace*, Found Firearm, Out of County Arrest Warrant: Officers responded to the area of Tunnel and Blanken regarding a fight involving a large group of males. In fact, officers responded a short time earlier regarding the same type of complaint. Turns out that both fights were related. The first time the officers responded, one of the combatants had left. The second fight ensued after that male returned. When the officers made contact with the combatants they each wanted to sign a citizen arrest against each other for battery. (In most misdemeanor crimes that a police officer does not witness, a "citizen's arrest" is required by the victim.) When both the males learned that they would both bear-

resting each other they decided that wanted to go their separate ways. Since closing time was near and there had been problems there this evening, officers stood by to monitor the patrons. One officer then spotted a loaded gun underneath a vehicle. A crime scene was established. Under further examination it was learned that the gun, that had its serial number scratched off, was loaded and "cocked." The gun was seized. But the case did not end there. Two, extremely drunk, males attempted to go through the crime scene to go into the bar. They were warned numerous times. After the men disobeyed the officers for the final time they were detained. One of the men had an outstanding felony warrant from Orange County, his hometown. Both men never made it to "last call." They were booked for public drunkenness and the outstanding warrant.

*Friday, Dec. 16, 8:08 p.m., 500 block of Girard, *Robbery with a Gun, Suspects Outstanding*: A Portola District man that was returning to his home was approached by two men. One of the men pointed a revolver at the man's chest and said, "Don't do anything stupid." The second suspect took cash, a cell phone, and a CD player from the victim and fled. Suspect #1: Hispanic male, 18-20 years old, 5'06", 150lbs., wearing: black beanie cap, large black jacket, and black pants; Suspect #2: Hispanic male, 18-20 years old, 5'06", 150lbs., wearing black beanie cap, long sleeve white t-shirt, and black pants.

*Saturday, Dec. 17, 10 p.m., Girard and Silliman, *Robbery, Suspects Booked*: A woman was walking to her car in the area of Girard and Silliman Streets when a car pulled adjacent to her. The passenger of the car jumped out and pulled the woman's purse off her shoulder and fled. Fortunately, the woman was not hurt and she was able to get a license plate number. An hour and a half later, a police sergeant saw the vehicle driving and stopped it. In the passenger seat was male that the woman described as the one who took her purse. Also in the car was the woman's purse. The woman was contacted and she was able to identify one of the suspects that took her purse. Both suspects, residents of San Francisco, were booked on robbery and conspiracy charges.

DIRECTV Penalized for Do Not Call Violations

Satellite television provider DIRECTV will pay \$5,335,000 to settle FTC charges that, since October 2003, DIRECTV and companies it hired to promote DIRECTV programming have been violating the *Do Not Call* provisions of the Commission's Telemarketing Sales Rule. This is the largest civil penalty the FTC has ever announced in a case enforcing any consumer protection law.

The complaint alleges that telemarketers calling on behalf of DIRECTV contacted consumers on the National DNC Registry. In addition, the complaint alleges that one of the telemarketers - Global Satellite, directly or through another entity - abandoned calls to consumers by failing to put a live sales representative on the line within two seconds after the called consumer completes his or her greeting, as required under the law.

The complaint also alleges that DIRECTV provided substantial assistance and support to Global Satellite, even though it knew or consciously avoided knowing that Global Satellite was violating the TSR.

75th Anniversary at St. Cecilia School

St. Cecilia School at 660 Vicente St. invites all alumni, friends, faculty and former faculty to join in celebrating its 75th anniversary on Sunday, Jan. 29 at the 11:30 a.m. Liturgy.

A reception and open house of the school will follow. Please call the school office at (415) 731-8400 or visit the website at stceciliaschool.org for additional information.

IRS Warns of eMail Scam about Tax Refunds

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service today issued a consumer alert about an Internet scam in which consumers receive an e-mail informing them of a tax refund.

The e-mail, which claims to be from the IRS, directs the consumer to a link that requests personal information, such as Social Security number and credit card information.

This scheme is an attempt to trick the e-mail recipients into disclosing their personal and financial data. The practice is called "phishing" for information.

The information fraudulently obtained is then used to steal the taxpayer's identity and financial assets.

Generally, identity thieves use someone's personal data to steal his or her financial accounts, run up charges on the victim's existing credit cards, apply for new loans, credit cards, services or benefits in the victim's name and even file fraudulent tax returns.

The bogus e-mail, which claims to come from "tax-refunds@irs.gov" tells the recipient that he or she is eligible to receive a tax refund for a

given amount. It then says that, to access a form for the tax refund, the recipient must use a link contained in the e-mail.

The link then asks for the personal and financial information.

The IRS does not ask for personal identifying or financial information via unsolicited e-mail.

Additionally, taxpayers do not have to complete a special form to obtain a refund.

If you receive an unsolicited e-mail purporting to be from the IRS, take the following steps:

*Do not open any attachments to the e-mail, in case they contain malicious code that will infect your computer.

*Contact the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 to determine whether the IRS is trying to contact you about a tax refund.

The IRS has seen numerous attempts over the years to defraud the public and the federal government through a variety of schemes, including abusive tax avoidance transactions, identity theft, claims for slavery reparations, frivolous arguments and more.

More information on these schemes may be found on the criminal enforcement page at IRS.gov.

Inadequacies of Traditional Estate Planning

by Mark H. Kaizerman

When I mention the words, estate planning, most people think of meeting with an attorney and drafting legal documents.

Traditionally, those documents include a will, durable power of attorney, health care proxy and perhaps a trust.

After you draft these documents, you meet to sign them, then you put them somewhere "safe," cut a check to the attorney and breathe a sigh of relief because you finally have things covered.

All is well and your estate is perfectly in order, right? Wrong!

Too often the drafting of legal documents is confused with developing an estate plan.

Sure, legal documents are part of an estate plan, but they are not "the" estate plan. You need to make sure that you have everything in one spot. If not, you could cause yourself some real problems.

That's why 98 percent of all estate plans fall short. That's why you have decades like the Terri Schiavo case and the Ted Williams dispute.

In order to make sure that these sort of things don't happen to you, you have to have a plan. Most people plan out what should happen in the event of their deaths. What if you are disabled or mentally incapacitated? Effective estate plans must be drafted in order to account for these kinds of contingencies.

If you wish to have an effective estate plan, you must answer four extremely critical questions:

1. What documents do I need?

You need a will, durable power of attorney, and health care proxy. Additionally, you need an original marriage certificate, military discharge paperwork, health and life insurance information, beneficiary designation forms, deeds, and appraisals.

Another necessity you need to have is a listing of important contacts with telephone numbers.

2. How will my beneficiaries find

these documents?

We all have our own personal and unique filing system that has worked well for us over the years. That's fine. You should use your own unique filing system, whatever works for you. However, you do need to create a system that "unlocks" your personal filing system.

For example, if something ever happened to you, how would your beneficiaries even know you had a safety deposit box, let alone the location of the bank or key?

3. Who should have access to these documents and when?

I know that's actually two questions camouflaged as one. Remember, these documents are personal and confidential.

Today, we are all too aware of the very real threat of identity theft. Safeguarding these documents and making them available, under specific circumstances, to a select group of individuals will allow you to protect your privacy while still preparing an effective estate plan.

4. Who will best advise my beneficiaries?

Your estate plan needs to address not only your financial assets, but also your dreams, wishes, and values. You need to designate that one person who can capture all these characteristics of your life, someone with whom you have shared those most personal thoughts. At you or your beneficiaries' time of need, who should be that one call?

Don't confuse proper estate planning with simply drafting the needed documents or purchasing an insurance policy or special investment product. An effective estate plan can only be accomplished with a well thought out approach that is designed to protect your most important information and guide your heirs. Only then will you have peace of mind in knowing that you've done your best for your loved ones and nothing important will be overlooked.

Saturdays are Special at Randall Museum

The Randall Museum offers drop-in, hands-on art and science workshops every Saturday from 1 to 4 p.m. at 199 Museum Way (off Roosevelt, above the Castro).

Workshops are \$3 per child; \$5 for a parent and child combo. All kids under 8 must be with a paying adult. Call 554-9600 for further information.

Other regular Saturday activities include:

*Morning Family Ceramics from 10 to 11:30 a.m. (\$5 per person workshop fee)

*Meet the Animals from 11:15

a.m. to 12 noon.

*Animal Feeding at 12 noon.

*Golden Gate Model Railroad Club Exhibit from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Square Dancing Class

The Caper Cutters of San Francisco will be holding a new beginners' square dance class on Mondays from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the St. Paul's Presbyterian Church at 43rd Avenue and Judah Street.

The first two sessions of the 12-week course free of charge and each additional class will be \$5 per person. For more information, call Al at (415) 753-5013.

Visitacion Valley Business Directory

Valley free listings in the 415 area code.
Call the Grapevine at (415) 467-9300.

ANTIQUES
JIM CHINESE ANTIQUES & AQUARIUM, 144 Leland Ave., 586-1038
AUTOMOTIVE
BAYSHORE AUTO, 2260 Bayshore Blvd., 467-6130
BAYSHORE SERVICE, 2596 Bayshore Blvd., 239-5239
BROTHERS AUTO BODY, 2520 Bayshore Blvd.
CHARLES GARAGE, 2550 Bayshore Blvd., 239-7450
TWAUTOMOTIVE, 2500 Bayshore Blvd., 585-8281
BANK
BANK OF AMERICA, 6 Leland Ave., 622-4501
BAKERS
LITTLE OUIAPO BAKE SHOP, 169 Leland Ave., 239-2253
BARBERS
DeMAIS BARBER SHOP, 35 Leland Ave.
THE SHOP (JB), 178 Leland Ave., 239-6709
BEAUTICIANS
BODY, SOUL & SPIRIT, 222 Leland Ave., 333-7261
MAY MAY BEAUTY SALON, 60 Leland Ave., 337-9381
MIZ RENAS SALON, 19 Blanken Ave., 467-3399
NAILS BY JENNY, 50 Leland Ave., 333-6800
WHOS BADD, 224 Leland Ave., 657-3156
BLIND CLEANING
SPEEDY ULTRASONIC BLIND CLEANING (commercial and residential), 1116 Grand St., 467-7506
BOARDING HOUSE
ABLE'S CASA, 850 Rutland St., 333-4664, fax 333-4693
BOOKKEEPERS
AMY ARAGON, PROFESSIONAL BOOKKEEPER, 467-8927
VERNA WALLACE E.A., 2320 Bayshore Blvd., 239-5333
CARPETS
HANSAN INTERIORS, 41 Leland Ave., 333-6382
CASKETS
CASKETORIUM, INC., 93 Leland Ave., 585-3451
CHURCHES
CHURCH OF THE VISITACION, 655 Sunnydale Ave., 239-5950
IGLESIA EL ESPIRITU SANTO, 38 Leland Ave.
KOREAN FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 333 Tunnel Ave., 468-1213
RIDGE VIEW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 590 Leland Ave., 239-6457
ST. JAMES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 240 Leland Ave., 586-6381
VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH, 305 Raymond Ave., 467-6055
VISITACION CHINESE BAPTIST CHURCH, 8 Desmond St., 333-4503
COFFEE
CANDLESTICK COFFEE, 2155 Bayshore Blvd., 467-2442
HAPPY DONUT, 2600 Bayshore Blvd., 469-5309
JOE, 28 Leland Ave.
CREDIT UNION
NORTHEAST COMMUNITY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION, 29 Leland Ave., 434-0738
DAY CARE
CAROUSEL DAY CARE, 261 Hahn St., 469-5353

DENTIST
VISITACION VALLEY DENTAL OFFICE (Albert Kuan, DDS), 37 Leland Ave., 239-5500
DEVELOPERS
VISITACION VALLEY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, 1099 Sunnydale Ave., 587-7895
ELECTRICAL
TATE ELECTRIC (Joel Tate), 467-4657
FLORISTS
IL FIORE FLOWERS, 2466 San Bruno Ave. 468-0145
GARDEN ORNAMENTS
SILVESTRI GARDEN ORNAMENTS, 2635 Bayshore Blvd., 239-5990
GROCERS
CASA LOPEZ PRODUCE, 58 Leland Ave., 586-4745
E-Z STOP MARKET, 2203 Geneva Ave., 585-9240
FIVE MILE MARKET, 3574 San Bruno Ave., 467-7300
K.C. MARKET, 400 Wide St., 467-3024
LA LOMA PRODUCE #2, 65 Leland Ave., 239-7520
LITTLE VILLAGE MARKET, 1450 Sunnydale Ave., 586-1815
M & M SHORTSTOP, 2145 Geneva Ave., 585-0878
PICCOLO PETE, 2155 Bayshore Blvd., 468-6800
7-11, 2200 Bayshore Blvd., 468-8646
SHUN LEE MARKET, 2400 Bayshore Blvd., 586-4851
SMITTY'S MARKET, 2610 Bayshore Blvd., 239-5506
SUPER FARM MARKET, 201 Leland Ave., 239-6856
TEDDY'S MARKET, 298 Teddy Ave.
HERBS
SANON HERBS, 33-A Leland Ave. 333-7469
HYPNOTHERAPY
VALERIE HABEGGER-HYPNOTHERAPY, 371 Teddy Ave., 468-5631
INSURANCE
EDIE EPPS (A.H.E. INSURANCE), 467-0236, Fax 467-0276
ROBERT LEHMAN, CLTC (Blue Cross), 333-0850
KITCHEN CABINETS
LEE CHANG INTERNATIONAL, 25 Leland Ave., 333-2730
LAUNDRY CLEANERS
BAY WASH, 44 Leland Ave., 333-9467
CITY WASH, 83 Leland Ave., 333-9467
COIN WASH & DRY LAUNDRY, 186 Leland Ave.
FORTY-NINER CLEANERS, 51 Leland Ave., 239-6418
LELAND AVENUE CLEANERS, 151 Leland Ave., 586-1412
VALLEY LAUNDRY, 90 Leland Ave.
VISITACION VALLEY LAUNDRY, 108 Leland Ave., 239-9030
LEARNING
3-N-1 LEARNING ACADEMY, 240 Leland Ave., 584-8555
VISITACION VALLEY COMMUNITY BEACON CENTER, 450 Raymond Ave., 452-4907
VISITACION VALLEY FAMILY SCHOOL, 325 Leland Ave., 585-9320
LIBRARY
VISITACION VALLEY BRANCH, 45 Leland Ave., 239-5270
MANUFACTURER
NATIONWIDE PAPER, 345 Schwerin St., 586-9160
MEDICAL
AMERICAN RED CROSS, BAY AREA CHAPTER, 1704 Sunnydale Ave., 584-3620
HAWKINS VILLAGE MEDICAL CLINIC (Dept. of Public Health), 1099 Sunnydale Ave., Appointments: 715-0310
DR. SAM HO, MD, 9 Sillman St. No. 4, 337-6135
NORTHEAST MEDICAL SERVICES, LELAND AVENUE, 82 Leland Ave., 391-9686 (ask for Leland Avenue clinic)
PORTOLA FOOT & ANKLE CLINIC (Dr. Ouyang Patel), 2858 San Bruno Ave. 467-7500

NOTARY
ROYAL PACIFIC MORTGAGE, 46 Leland Ave., 333-4900
ORGANIZATIONS
ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER, 2442 Bayshore Blvd., 587-2689
GENEVA TERRACE PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION, 60 Burr Ave., 584-2700
GIRLS AFTER SCHOOL ACADEMY, 2050 Sunnydale Ave., 333 Schwerin St., 584-4044
JOHN KING SENIOR COMMUNITY, 500 Raymond Ave., 239-6233
LELAND HOUSE, 141 Leland Ave., 405-2000
ROCK (Real Options for City Kids), 590 Leland Ave., 333-4001
VISITACION VALLEY SENIOR CENTER, 66 Raymond Ave., 467-4499
PHARMACY
VISITACION VALLEY PHARMACY, 100 Leland Ave., 239-5811
PHOTOGRAPHER
WALTER CORBIN PHOTOGRAPHY (freelance), 435 Sawyer St., 587-9471, fax 337-8620
PLUMBING
MARK VOELKER PLUMBING, 99 Arleta Ave., 467-7401
POST OFFICE
VISITACION USPO, 68 Leland Ave., (800) 275-8777
REAL ESTATE
JUSTYNAP TO (Century 21), 2488 Junipero Serra Blvd., Daly City 94015, (650) 991-5215, Mobile (415) 830-1235
CATHY KLUNE SAUNDERS (Zephyr Real Estate), 215 West Portal Ave. 731-5011 ex. 163
RESTAURANTS
BAYSIDE CAFE, 2011 Bayshore Blvd., 467-2023
CLIFFS BAR-B-Q & SEAFOOD, 2177 Bayshore Blvd. 330-0736, Fax 330-9813
G & L BAKERY & RESTAURANT, 198 Leland Ave., 239-6283
HERNANDEZ TAQUERIA & BAKERY, 98 Leland Ave., 587-7721
LUAN FAT BAKERY, 110 Leland Ave., 585-1167
MISS MATTIE'S SUNFLOWER BLUES CAFE, 107 Leland Ave., 333-8854
PHO Y & G RESTAURANT, 73 Leland Ave., 469-5686
TWO JACKS, 167 Leland Ave., 337-0433
SCULPTOR
CARTORGINALS (Mikal Cartor), 2 Hahn St., 239-4138
SELF-DEVELOPMENT
DYNAMIC DEVELOPMENTS (Marjorie Ann Williams, CEO, Career and Self-Enhancements Specialist), 467-7608
SERVICE PROVIDERS
THE VILLAGE, 1099 Sunnydale Ave., 239-5045
VISITACION VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH OUTREACH CENTER, 57 Leland Ave.
VISITACION VALLEY BILINGUAL EDUCATION, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES & TRAINING (VVBESST), 120 Leland Ave.
VISITACION VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTER (VCC), 50 Raymond Ave., 467-6400
VCC FAMILY & COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTER, 161 Leland Ave., 586-6998, Fax 586-8027
VISITACION VALLEY JOBS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VJET), 1099 Sunnydale Ave., 239-2866
TAVERN
THE CLUB HOUSE, 25 Blanken Ave.
TELEPHONE
D & A WIRELESS, 78 Leland Ave., 452-4139
VARIETY
GOLDEN 99 CENTS ZONE, 5-7 Leland Ave., 333-3923

Leaving Secrets

Creating a Personal Instruction Manual for Life

by Joe Vitale

Imagine if your great, great grandfather or grandmother had left you a book with her secrets for living. Maybe it contained nuggets of wisdom, yummy recipes, favorite jokes, or just insights for how to lead a good life. Ever since people learned of my next book, Life's Missing Instruction Manual, people are curious how to create their own "manual" for life.

You can leave such a book for your own family. What are the key lessons you've learned in your life? Are you ready to share them with your children and grandchildren – or with your friend, siblings, parents, and grandparents?

What you've gleaned from your life experiences can make things easier for your children or your relatives. In fact, the lessons you've learned from trial and error can be the perfect gift for everyone in your life – or for one person who matters to you. Here's how to commit your insights to writing and share them with your fellow life travelers.

*Carry a pad of paper around with you everywhere for a week.

*Jot down your thoughts and observations as they occur to you. Don't judge them. Just make note of them.

*Add personal stories and memories, as they come to mind. Again, don't edit your thoughts. Just commit them to paper.

*Take a few days to go through your notes, and underline the most important passages, and make additional comments in the margins.

*From this, distill the lessons you most want to share with others: your perspective, your values, what matters most to you, and your reactions to the world around you.

*Find a beautiful journal or blank book – one that you feel a strong connection with. You might find it at a bookstore, an antique store, an online auction site, a craft store; or

even a flea market. Where you find it doesn't matter. How you feel about it does.

*Fill the journal with your own instruction manual for life. Make sure to include a title and your name.

*Find a special person to share it with, and turn the presentation of the journal into a celebration.

If you don't feel comfortable writing your notes and stories, you can dictate them into a portable tape recorder, and later, you can transcribe them into a journal. You don't have to be a bestselling author, academic, or philosopher to create an instruction manual that can help your loved ones every day of their lives... and be passed on to future generations as well.

Joe Vitale is the author of the forthcoming book, *Life's Missing Instruction Manual* (Wiley, March 2006). Read more about it at <http://www.missingmanual.blogspot.com>.

Events at Visitation Valley Branch Library

Following are events in June at the Visitation Valley Branch Library, 45 Leland Ave. (at Desmond Street):

*Jan. 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31, Tuesday: Preschool Storytime for ages 3-5 at 10:30 a.m.

*Jan. 11, Wednesday: Preschool Video at 10:30 a.m.

*Jan. 14: Saturday: Celebrate Lunar New Year with the Chinese Lion Dancers for children of all ages at 1:30 p.m.

Crossword Puzzle Solution

C	A	B	A	H	A	S	O	D	E	R
U	P	A	S	O	C	A	C	I	D	E
S	I	S	H	S	C	I	E	L	I	S
H	A	S	L	E	T	L	I	L	I	T
		A	A	L	S	D	O			
C	H	A	R	T	E	R	A	T	L	A
A	A	A		R	A	F		A	R	A
B	I	R	D	S		M	E	A	N	I
		I	U	S		A	B	A		
A	G	H	A	S		R	E	E	F	E
C	L	A	P		A	E	F		V	A
R	O	B	E		A	K	U		U	B
E	B	U	R		T	E	L		S	E

FAMILY & COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTER

VISITACION VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTER, INC.

Parenting Education Workshop

Friday, January 13
5:30 to 7 p.m.
at 161 Leland Ave.

Topic: Lead Poisoning
Speaker: David Lo,
Health Educator
S.F. Dept. of Public Health



For more information, contact the staff of Family and Community Services Center:
Meriam T. Abalos, FCSC Director
Marichelle Punzalan, Assistant Coordinator
Tammie Lawrence, Outreach Worker
Joyce Boone, Family Counselor

Monday and Friday: 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Saturday: 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Email: meriam_vvcc@sbcglobal.net

161 Leland Avenue

Parent's Advisory Meeting,

Friday, January 6

5:30 to 7 p.m. at 161 Leland Ave.

Court Mandated Men's Class

Wednesdays 6 to 8 p.m.

January 4, 11, 18, and 25 at 161 Leland Ave.

Meet & Eat with

Games and Activities

Friday, January 20,

5:30 to 7 p.m. at 161 Leland Ave.

Enhance Information

and Referral Drop-in

Every Monday through Friday

January 3 through 31

9 am. to 5 p.m.

at 161 Leland Ave.

Free Food Distribution,

Monday, January 9, 16, 23 and 30

3 to 4 p.m. at 161 Leland Ave.

Emergency food box available anytime.

For more information, please call

(415) 586-6998, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

(415) 586-6998 Fax 586-8027



**Cathy began looking at Visitacion Valley real estate in 1949,
and she's been out in front of the competition ever since.**

Cathy has been the most successful REALTOR® in Visitacion Valley for more than 20 years.

She was born and raised in the Valley, and has successfully represented buyers and sellers for years. She's actively involved in neighborhood charities and community events.

For all your real estate needs, call Cathy!

Cathy Kline Saunders
Broker Associate, REALTOR®
415.731.5000 ext 163



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